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# ESSENTIALS OF PUBLIC SPEAKING

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## PREFACE

Short evening courses in public speaking have become so popular that the problem of supplementing the work in the class room with helpful text material has given instructors great difficulty. The average text book is too large and night students have not the time to carry out programs of selective reading.

The author has attempted to fill this need by setting forth in a brief, concise form only the essentials of the subject. He does not claim for the work any originality of analysis; his sole aim has been to include in one small volume a brief but comprehensive outline of the fundamentals of effective speaking in as logical an order as the subject permits.

WARREN C. DUBoIS.

165 BROADWAY, NEW YORK CITY.

September 1st, 1921.

To HAMILTON COLLEGE  
The “*Home of Oratory*”

# ESSENTIALS OF PUBLIC SPEAKING

## CHAPTER I.

### A TALK WITH BEGINNING SPEAKERS

Until recently the ability to speak in public was regarded as an asset required only by lawyers, clergymen, politicians and professional speakers. And even among these it was often considered an inherited gift rather than something that could be acquired or developed. But recent years have shown that speaking ability is just as useful an art to business men generally, not only for itself but for the self-confidence, poise and other by-products that result from its study and practice. The results obtained by students of short courses have proved the theory of the old Roman, "Poets are born, but orators are made." Lord Chesterfield wrote to his son that every man of fair abilities might be an orator. The vulgar, he said, look upon a fine speaker as a supernatural being, endowed

with some peculiar gift of heaven. He himself maintained that a good speaker is as much a mechanic as a good shoemaker, and that the two trades were equally to be learned by the same amount of application.

It is of the utmost importance that the beginning speaker should approach his task with the proper viewpoint. Speaking is an activity. Your success is to be measured by your ability to do the very thing and not by your knowledge of the principles that underlie it. You may master all the theories of swimming and still be unable to take a single stroke. You might spend years on the study of rhythm, grace and expression, and still be unable to dance an old-fashioned waltz. The study of speaking must be approached in the same way in which we begin to learn to swim or dance.

Recall, if you can, the days when you were learning to swim. You had a host of friends ready and willing to enlighten you on the mysteries of the art. Each had a pet theory which, put into operation, would enable you to learn in a few minutes. But you found that the novel sensations which accompanied your

first dips expelled all the instructions and theories given you, and that if you had tried to keep in mind all that was told you, you would probably get a mental cramp and drown. Later, however, when the strangeness of being in water began to wear off, your mental calm returned and you were able to try out some of the theories which had been advanced. Step by step, you acquired a form until you suddenly awoke to the realization that you could swim. With that realization came a feeling that swimming was a natural activity and that if you had only had the self-confidence in yourself, you could have learned in a few minutes. You forgot, however, that the viewpoint which made you laugh at your slowness in learning was a gradual growth and not a sudden acquisition.

So with speaking. The first thing to be acquired is the self-confidence that comes from wearing away those novel sensations that accompany your first attempts on the platform. Practice alone will do it. No amount of reading or study of principles will obviate the necessity of passing through all the strange

feelings and emotions that attend first efforts. In the words of Calvin Leslie Lewis, who, as head of the department of oratory at Hamilton College, has probably trained more successful speakers than any other living instructor of the subject, "The only way to learn to speak is by speaking."

The first efforts are usually discouraging. The novelty of being on a platform, facing a large number of silent mouths and eyes, awakens all sorts of fears and new sensations. Each speaker is inclined to believe that his problem is different and insurmountable. Whatever the form your sensations assume, they are all traceable to one thing—lack of experience. And with each additional effort, they will decrease and gradually disappear.

Self-consciousness and nervousness are the most common. Self-consciousness is that state of mental confusion resulting from the inability to focus all of one's mentality on the task at hand. Instead of concentrating on the subject matter of the speech, the novice divides his thinking between the subject and himself. Once get accustomed to the platform and this

mental state will soon give place to confidence and concentration.

Nervousness is somewhat different. Anticipation of a difficult task excites the nerves, and the nerves in turn generate more energy than can be consumed. If you think nervousness is a handicap, you are mistaken; it is your greatest blessing. Dr. Russell H. Conwell, author of "Acres of Diamonds," and one of the most experienced lecturers in the world, never speaks without a preliminary attack of nervousness that makes his friends wonder why he enjoys the art. An interesting comment on nervousness was made to the author, and for the benefit of men who think it is a handicap it is repeated here. An American general who saw service at the front in France made a particular study of various types of men as they conducted themselves under fire. One of his conclusions was that the nervous men are the steadiest in a crisis and that the so-called "stolid" men, who show no uneasiness before going over the top, frequently "blow up" in man-to-man fighting. He explained the difference by a theory which may not be

sound psychologically but which has a measure of truth which warrants its repetition.

“The nervous boy discovers early in his youth that he suffers from a handicap which must be considered in everything he undertakes. Whenever he acts he must not only expend the ordinary amount of energy but he must also whip his will to stick to the line of action in spite of his nervousness. The result of this constant effort is the development of a certain force of control which enables him to carry out his purpose in spite of his nerves. A battle is something which no man can comprehend until he is in it. The stolid man is apt to find himself in a situation which shakes his composure for the first time. And never having built up a force which enables him to control his nerves, he is likely to ‘go to pieces.’ But to the nervous man, it is merely another test of his strength and courage, and with the aid of the ‘antitoxin’ which he has been unconsciously building up for many years, he comes through.”

You may not agree with this theory, but it serves a purpose. If you are nervous, the

greater is your need of speaking. And the more you build up this "antitoxin," the better fortified you will be not only in speaking but in every other activity that requires concentration in a trying situation.

A word about the proper use of this or any text book. Speaking, like every other activity, has many phases. If you allow yourself to think of the many things you must learn you will probably become as confused and as discouraged as a weaponless man in the middle of a den of wild animals. If you try to carry to the platform all the ideas and instructions in this book, you will get mental indigestion and fail.

The aim of all education is to enable the student to master correct principles to the point where they can be applied by subconscious habit. Your first speech will carry out many of the rules herein set forth. Study your weaknesses and seek to overcome them one by one. To undertake too much at a time is far worse than to attempt too little. After considerable experience you will find yourself applying all the principles with little or no

thought of them, just as you are able to read your morning paper at breakfast without thinking of how to handle your knife and fork.

The arrangement of this book does not give the elements of speaking in the order in which they should be acquired. It simply sets forth in as logical a scheme as the subject permits the essential points to be learned and applied. Read it with that in mind.

The manifestations of progress come in fits and starts. The curve of achievement resembles the sky line of a range of mountains beginning at the sea and ending at the highest peak. Between crests there are valleys of depression. After the beginner enjoys the first realization of progress, a period of slump and discouragement is likely to follow. But if he keeps on he will get out of the valley and reach another crest from which he can see not only the goal of his struggle but the height he has already attained. The secret of success is to keep faith and courage when in the valley. The slump is only imaginary. Every effort is carrying you a step nearer your goal.

## CHAPTER II.

### CONSIDER THE AUDIENCE

The farmer is judged by the satisfaction which his produce gives the consumer. The successful artist is the one whose paintings give pleasure to those who observe them. The speech that wins is the one that produces in the audience the thoughts, ideas, feelings or emotions which the speaker experiences. That is his goal and unless his efforts meet that test, he has failed.

A great many speakers fail because they have neglected to take into consideration the viewpoint of the hearer. Audiences differ. But they are all composed of human beings, and all human beings are alike in many ways. Let us consider some of the laws which control all minds.

#### *Mental Energy*

Every man possesses a certain degree of mental alertness. When he is asleep, it is at

zero; if he were on a desert plain, standing alone, defending himself from wild animals surrounding him, it would be at its highest. It fluctuates between these extremes, according to the time of day, the state of his mental and physical condition, and the task on which he is engaged. A lawyer defending a man accused of murder is on his mental toes, ready to spring in any direction. The next hour that same lawyer, relieved of the strain of the trial, sinks back into composure and his mental motor slows down to the point necessary to meet the less important problems which confront him.

Prehistoric man was ever on the alert when alone—wild animals and hostile tribes compelled it. But when he joined his tribe, he could afford to operate on fewer mental cylinders—he was safer. Life has changed. But we still show characteristics of the prehistoric man when collected in groups. And if that group is engaged in a common pursuit, the individual consciousness blends with those of the group and gradually each member comes to regard himself as a part of the whole.

This group consciousness decreases the mental alertness of the individual and this decrease of mental energy of the individual member of a crowd explains many characteristics of an audience. It has a great lesson for the speaker. An audience will not keep on the firing line the same amount of mental energy that it would if separated into individuals. Therefore, if you would succeed in getting your listeners to think or act, you must not impose any more of a burden on their mental energies than is necessary.

Herbert Spencer in his masterful essay on "The Philosophy of Style" reduces all successful writing to its observance of the law of the economy of the reader's attention. Whatever may be the value of that theory in writing, there can be no doubt but that it is the first law in a speaker's success in so far as his speech, apart from its delivery, is concerned. The speaker translates his thoughts and feelings into language; the audience translates that language back into thoughts and feelings. The latter process must be accomplished as the speech flows; there is no

opportunity to go over and over the words as is possible in reading. Unless the audience, with its decreased mental energy, can perform this act as the speech proceeds, the speaker has failed to accomplish his purpose. The task, then, is so to frame the expression as to gain the desired result with the least effort on the part of those who hear.

### *Mental Imagery and Imagination*

Hold out your right hand and look at it carefully for a few seconds. Close your eyes and try to recall its general appearance. With little effort, you can see that hand with many of the details. That picture which appeared before you when your eyes were closed was a *visual image*, a photograph which the mind took, developed and printed while you perceived the object with your eyes.

Whistle a few notes of some popular song. Then let your mind run over the same notes. What you hear is an *auditory image*. You recalled the sounds of your own voice by means of auditory imagery.

Recall, if you can, the taste of your favorite

fruit. If you succeed, it is because of the power of your *gustatory imagery*. Run your finger over the cover of this book, and the sensation may be renewed a few seconds later by the aid of your *tactual imagery*. If you can enjoy the fragrance of your favorite flower after the scent has passed, it is because you possess *olfactory imagery*.

We have completed the imagery of the five senses. There are others—the imagery of motion or motor imagery, thermal imagery or the imagery of temperature—but they are really parts of the original five.

All our knowledge of the past, all our power of recollection, rests upon our ability to bring up mental images of what we saw, heard, felt, tasted or smelled. Every impression made upon our minds from the outside world must travel by way of one or more of the five senses. It is the work of the imagination to supply these mental images, which are present recollections of past realities.

There are two kinds of imagination—productive and reproductive. To hold a mental image of this morning's breakfast table is

merely the work of *reproductive imagination*. But to combine mental images of some friend, a desert and a camel, so that you can see that friend riding on a camel across a desert necessitates *productive imagination*. Eli Whitney saw a cat clawing at a chicken through the openings of the crate. The space between the slats was too small, so all the cat could extract was feathers. Later, Whitney recalled the scene with these modifications—instead of a chicken he saw raw cotton with seeds too large to pass through the openings. This mental image gave us the cotton gin—one of the many creations of the power of productive imagination.

We vary in our powers of imagination; some can recall in all its details the first circus; some can return from a musical comedy and hear again every lyric in the score; there are men and women who can recall the taste of five or six varieties of apples. With the average individual, the visual imagery is the strongest; then come the auditory and tactual imagery. That is why a delineation of a scene is more easily appreciated than

a description of what the speaker heard or felt.

Needless to say, our imagination approaches but cannot be greater than our experiences. To tell a native of Guam that the Eiffel Tower is higher than the Woolworth Building would be as futile as explaining a passage in Greek to an African by translating it into Chinese. The mental images follow the experiences. The speaker must employ only those which the audience can appreciate by reason of its experience.

### *Concrete Language*

We have seen that in order to attain his goal, the speaker must express his thoughts and feelings in such a way that the audience will translate his language back into the thoughts and feelings which the speaker experiences. This requires not only accuracy but also proper selection, so that the mental processes of the audiences may be attended with the least expenditure of energy. Without attempting to trace the course of a sentence from its hearing to its understanding and

assimilation, it should be stated that before any given language can register clear thought in the mind of the recipient, it must pass through the stage of mental imagery. To illustrate: a speaker states, "Some animals are faithful companions." In order to get a clear understanding of the speaker's meaning, the audience starts to turn the word "animals" into some definite mental image. Some may think of dogs, others think of horses; some may think of cats. Those who think of dogs will probably attempt to picture a particular breed of dogs, such as an Irish setter or a Newfoundland. But this mental process requires a certain expenditure of mental energy which could be avoided. Had the speaker said "Newfoundland dogs are faithful companions," he would not only save this mental energy, but he would be certain that all got his meaning. This illustrates the force of calling up a distinct visual image. The same is true of other imagery; "sour as vinegar" means more than "bitter"; "smooth as a billiard ball" has more of an appeal than the mere word "smooth"; "fragrant as a rose"

requires no additional thoughts as does the expression "sweet smelling."

So much for words. The idea which is set forth in concrete rather than general language, language which calls forth a distinct mental image, requires a less amount of energy to understand and appreciate, and is therefore the more effective. Now let us regard this principle from a larger viewpoint—one which is concerned with comprehensive ideas rather than with single tangible objects.

### *Inductive and Deductive Thinking*

A student reads the lives of Washington, Lincoln and Roosevelt. He is impressed by the numerous incidents in the life of each, which indicated great human sympathy. He comes to the conclusion that our three greatest presidents were men of extraordinary human sympathy. This process of reasoning, from particular incidents to a general conclusion, is known as induction, or inductive reasoning. This form of reasoning is very simple; in fact, it comes so easily and naturally that the drawing of hasty conclusions causes more pain and

sorrow than evil motives. Had the student made such a general statement to one who had recently read the lives of these three men, the statement would immediately call up the same anecdotes that both had read, and would be easily understood and appreciated. But suppose the hearer had not read biographies of the presidents, what would be the train of thought following such a statement?

In order better to illustrate the principle, we will take different facts. A speaker states, "The desire to be president has caused more than one man to die of a broken heart." Assume for the purpose of the illustration that a brief recess enables the audience to carry through the thought. Some member might reason thus, "Oh, yes, Daniel Webster aimed for the presidency and failure killed him." This process of reasoning, from a general statement to a specific instance, is known as deduction, or deductive reasoning. It is the reverse of induction, is more indefinite in its progress, and requires considerable concentration and mental energy to perform.

We have assumed in the foregoing illustra-

tion that the audience had the time and the necessary knowledge with which to carry the general assertion over to a concrete instance. The average instance does not afford this opportunity. And if the speaker passes on without the audience's having translated the general statement into a general illustration or a specific instance, the statement remains indefinite and is cast aside by the audience to make room for the ideas which follow.

The speaker should never indulge in abstract statements without supporting them with general illustrations or specific instances. And a better rule is to state your concrete facts first and then, if necessary, confirm the conclusion or induction by a general statement.

### *Causes of Belief*

So much speaking has for its aim the acceptance of some belief, that much can be learned by a brief investigation of the causes of believing.

What does the average man believe, and believe so strongly that if you differ with him he is likely to become angry? The tenets of

his religion. How did he come to believe in them; by reasoning? No, the average individual who holds to a faith, acquired it when a child. At that early age, when the mind was incapable of reasoning, the parents and the Sunday Schools taught the child that there was a Supreme Being and that the conduct of the world was regulated by laws laid down by that Supreme Being. The child believed because neither its own mind nor that of others questioned or contradicted these statements. Years later, when the reasoning powers of the child are developed, he may question some of the tenets of the faith in which he was reared. But in a crisis which brushes away light and frivolous thinking and compels him to act on what he really believes, he will probably be found clinging to the faith of his childhood.

What does this prove? Simply that everything we hear becomes a truth with us unless our own brain or that of another questions it and thereby raises an issue. In the case of a speaker addressing an audience, the problem is to combat the questioning of the audi-

ence. If the speaker can win out, he has secured acceptance of the belief.

With the decreased mental energy of the audience and the power of the speaker's personality, the audience is at a disadvantage. It requires mental energy to question a statement, and if the force of the speaker's presence is sufficient, the doubts are resolved in his favor. But if doubts arise they can be overcome not only by reasoning but also by repetition. The effect of repeating a statement is far greater than that of argument. The problem, therefore, of getting others to accept a belief is not so much a question of fashioning keen arguments, as it is a task of filling the mind with that thought to the exclusion of contradictory ideas. No two objects can occupy the same space at the same time; no two ideas can occupy the brain at the same moment. Each time you repeat a statement, you focus the attention of the audience upon it. Gradually, whatever contradictory ideas may have suggested themselves lose ground, and the speaker's statement occupies the entire thought of the brain. Have you ever stopped

to think of how our best advertised products are sold? "Eventually, why not now?" is the sole argument of a flour manufacturer. "The Prudential has the strength of Gibraltar" is repeated so often that no one has any doubts left—they have been crowded out of the brain.

American history teems with instances of public men attaining their goals merely by asserting a conclusion so frequently and so vigorously that it drove all opposition from the public mind and became accepted as gospel truth. Andrew Jackson sought to destroy the United States Bank. He said it was unsound. The figures compiled by his opponents proved otherwise. But Jackson went on repeating "The bank is broke and Biddle knows it" until he won the public over to his side. Hiram W. Johnson, standing alone, elected himself Governor of California by embracing one issue and hammering away at it every night of the campaign. Touring the state in his own motor car, he addressed little groups in every hamlet and village, ending every speech with these words:

"And remember this, my friends, I am go-

ing to be the next Governor of California, and when I am, I am going to kick out of this government William F. Herrin and the Southern Pacific Railroad. Good night!"

Each time Johnson repeated this statement he brought the minds of the electorate back to the idea. Gradually it crowded out all doubts and was accepted as true. He was elected. The effect of repetition has never been better expressed than by our old friend, Mr. Dooley: "I belave annything at all, if ye only tell it to me often enough."

Experience teaches us to question everything or nearly everything that we hear. Otherwise, our safe-deposit boxes would be filled with worthless oil and mining stocks. Self-protection has trained us to question nearly every matter before taking action. But before our minds begin to question anything, the idea must reach that degree of definiteness which makes questioning possible. When the insurance agent says, "I want you to take a policy for \$10,000," the goal is perfectly definite. Then the mind turns to questioning: "Can I afford it"; "Couldn't I use

the premiums to better advantage?" But if he merely presents the benefits of such a policy, the mind of the prospect is focused on the arguments in its favor, and whatever thinking he does is more likely to be in the nature of the conclusion that he should invest. For that reason, the skilful salesman never puts the blunt question until he has caused you to come to that conclusion by your own thinking.

We have seen that the mental energy of an audience is limited. If the speaker stops short of the goal, the energy of the audience is spent in carrying the thought to its conclusion. There is little or none left for questioning. This method of convincing an audience by directing its thoughts toward the goal, but by refraining from stating the goal until its own thought has reached the point, is called *suggestion*. The audience believes that it is making its own decision and its mind is so completely engaged in carrying the thought to that conclusion, that there is no room or time for opposing or deterring ideas.

Perhaps the greatest modern master of sug-

gestion is William Jennings Bryan. In the campaign of 1896, he aimed to focus the attention of the American people on the certainty of McKinley's defeat. Had he said, "McKinley will be defeated," the audience would have undoubtedly carried the thought over to the reasons why he would not be beaten. True, had he repeated the statement often enough, he would have gained some effect. But instead of repetition, he employed suggestion. Notice how he refrains from a blunt statement:

"McKinley was the most popular man among the Republicans, and three months ago everybody in the Republican Party prophesied his election. How is it today? Why, the man who was once pleased to think that he looked like Napoleon—that man shudders today when he remembers that he was nominated on the anniversary of the Battle of Waterloo. Not only that, but as he listens he can hear with ever-increasing distinctness the sound of the waves as they beat upon the lonely shore of St. Helena."

## CHAPTER III.

### THE PURPOSES OF SPEAKING

No architect would think of beginning work on the plans for a building until he was told the purpose for which the structure was to be used. Unless the speaker builds his speech to meet the need of the occasion or the goal he has in mind, he cannot hope to achieve success.

Viewed from the standpoint of the occasion, there is the after-dinner speech, the political speech, the lecture, the board-of-directors speech, the sermon, the talk to the jury, the argument before the bench of judges, the Fourth of July oration, and a host of others. Many of these have much in common; they overlap in so far as purpose is concerned. The only really scientific classification, therefore, is one based not on the occasion, but on the ultimate aim or end of the speech.

Students of oratory, from Quintilian down, have endeavored to classify speeches according to the aim of the speaker. It is not the

author's intention to invent any new analysis, but merely to present a division that will be of most usefulness to the beginning speaker. Roughly speaking, there are two main divisions: first, the purely entertaining speech, and, second, the speech which seeks to accomplish something more serious than merely to please the listener during its delivery. In the first class fall the after-dinner speech, the speech of welcome to returning friends, the monologue of vaudeville, and all those which merely aim to please the listeners for the time being. Such speeches may or may not be humorous, but they should be felicitous. Happiness is the key-note of their purpose. If the speaker holds the attention and amuses, he has achieved his end.

Most theatre-goers look upon tragedy as calling forth the highest art and skill of the actors. But our greatest stage celebrities are almost unanimous in the assertion that comedy is the most difficult and trying of all. If this sounds discouraging, there is hope in the testimony of our greatest popular humorist, Irvin S. Cobb. Mr. Cobb always keeps his

feet on the ground; he never indulges in flattery or blatant optimism. But he states that everyone has the ability to develop into a humorous writer or speaker. The idea that it is a gift of birth he calls "bushwah."

The ability to make others laugh requires two assets—first, the cultivation of the eye for the humorous side of every situation; second, the knack of presenting what strikes our funny bone in a manner that will make others experience the same sensation. There is really nothing new in humor. All our brand-new jokes are, as Mark Twain points out, old ones in new garments. If you question his statement, note the next fifty funny stories or sayings you hear and you will find that they fall into one of a few classes.

Every man has a sense of humor and everyone possesses in some degree the ability to make others enjoy what is to him the funny side of life. It takes time and effort and much experimentation to find yourself in this art, but practice will, as in every other field of endeavor, bear fruit.

Humor, of course, is only one of the factors

of entertainment. Some of the others are: (1) the vital; (2) the unusual; (3) the uncertain; (4) the antagonistic; (5) the animate, and (6) the concrete.

By vital we mean those things which touch our most intimate interests in existence. Professor William James wrote that the average man developed but ten per cent of his ability; recent statistics show that one out of every ten marriages ends in the divorce court. These are vital facts.

The Chinese pay the doctor while they are well. As soon as they fall ill, his income from the sick stops. That is unusual and therefore entertaining.

The uncertain is another name for the suspended, or the surprise. The secret of writing a good detective story lies in the art of withholding from the reader the solution of the mystery until the very end.

Have you ever noticed how many books and plays consist merely of a hero trying to get something with a villain obstructing his efforts? Combat of some sort is the key of the antagonistic. Tell an audience of some

struggle — football game, battle, fight for recognition—and they respond like children hearing a fairy tale.

“Life-like” describes the animate. The properties of radium may not entertain all listeners, but few will fail to enjoy an account of how Madame Currie chanced upon that marvelous element.

The concrete is the tangible, the actual. An explanation of why the human body will sink in fresh water might not be interesting to the average man on the street. But let the speaker discourse on how the body will float in the Great Salt Lake and everyone “pricks up his ears.”

Perhaps the greatest virtue of an entertaining speech is the continuity of its interest. Never allow the speech to “sag”; keep the minds of the listeners off the ground.

The second division—the speech which aims to do something more than entertain—comprises every other conceivable form of address. This class may be subdivided into four groups, or into two groups of two subdivisions each:

## I.—Speeches without emotional appeal.

- (a) Instructive.
- (b) Argumentative.

## II.—Speeches with emotional appeal.

- (a) Impressive.
- (b) Appealing.

*The Instructive Speech*

The instructive speech aims to clarify. Nearly every speech at some point confines itself to clearness. But for the purpose of this classification, we are only concerned with clearness as an end and not as a means.

Recently Elihu Root appeared before the members of the Bar Association of New York City with an address on "The League of Nations." He told them of the machinery created by the League and how the draftsmen intended it should function. He did not attempt to impress them with the magnitude of the undertaking, nor did he aim to gain their acceptance of his belief in the efficacy of the League or in the wisdom of its rejection by the United States Senate. He made no appeal

for action on the part of his listeners. His purpose was merely to make clear to the members of the bar the organization and operation of this new super-state which the Peace Commissioners had set up.

Here was an excellent example of the instructive speech. Lectures and most addresses before business and professional meetings come within this class. The virtue sought in such speeches may be boiled down to this,—to make the audience understand the subject as clearly as the speaker. And in striving for this virtue, there is a cardinal rule which is nearly always applicable—*explain the unknown in terms of the known*. Victor Hugo began his masterful description of the Battle of Waterloo by asking the reader to imagine a capital A. Each point of the field was assigned to some part of the letter, thereby assisting the reader to build up a clear visual image of the struggle.

Never use technical terms unless (1) you are sure they are known to the audience, or (2) you have preceded the use of the term with a clear explanation of its meaning.

Nothing will kill the attention and interest of an audience so quickly as the use of some word or phrase which is unintelligible to them. They immediately conclude that you are "speaking over their heads" and become restless. Many speakers use technical terms with the parenthesis, "I'll explain that later." This is also dangerous. It is like trying to hang a coat upon the wall before driving the nail. If you must use technical terms, explain them immediately or, better, precede the use with a brief definition.

Be sure that your illustrations or specific instances are known to your hearers. A speaker, addressing a New York audience, likened the heat of the boiler room on a battleship to the temperature of noonday in Rome. The illustration meant nothing. Had he mentioned the heat of a subway train in August with the fans out of order, the simile would have explained.

The best mental images to call forth are those easily seen, heard or felt by the audience. This usually means images which are most frequently called to mind. Beware, how-

ever, of such hackneyed expressions as "white as snow," "cold as ice," "sharp as a razor." They are so common that they merely mean words to the listener. Repeated use has robbed them of force and freshness.

Remember that the average individual develops his visual imagery more than he does any of the others. The use of mental pictures, therefore, is the most effective means of obtaining clearness.

### *The Impressive Speech*

When we couple with clearness the emotional association, our aim is impressiveness. Here the appeal is to the heart rather than to the head. Not only must the idea be seen, it must also be felt. None of us—no matter how highly developed intellectually — can withstand the effect of emotion. Thoughts may stir, but feelings move.

A newspaper correspondent witnesses the Battle of the Marne. He sees the Germans attempt to cross the river, hears the roar of the French "seventy-fives," smells the light brown smoke from the guns, feels the ground

beneath him shudder as the shells explode. Every emotion is aroused. Returning to his home in Switzerland, he appears before an audience of his countrymen with an account of his experiences. He doesn't argue the cause of the Allies, he makes no appeal for a declaration of war—he simply desires to make them run the gamut of feelings which he experienced as an eye witness.

His aim is to be impressive. Eulogies of dead heroes, patriotic addresses on national holidays, invectives—all fall within this class. Impressiveness can be gained by any one or more of a variety of means. Let us consider some of them.

Quoting a well known man not only gains acceptance of an idea, it stirs the feelings with which the memory of that man is linked. A speaker addressing an audience on the value of utilizing all the faculties of the mind, interpolated this paragraph:

“Perhaps the secret of Roosevelt's greatness will never be revealed by any biographer in a more terse manner than by the man's own words in the last week of his life. Writing to

his sister, Mrs. Robinson, he defended his strenuous life in these words: 'When I was twenty-one, I promised myself that I would live my life to the hilt until I was sixty. And I can now say that I have kept that promise.'"

Generalities may impress those who are constantly endeavoring to frame their concepts of the general laws of life and science, but they mean little to the average member of an audience. To say that Washington was tender-hearted, kind and affectionate is not nearly so impressive as the following lines from one of his biographies:

"The General had finished his farewell address. A death-like silence gripped all around him. Standing near was General Greene—in tears. Without a word spoken, Washington advanced toward him and kissed him."

Specific instances which arouse sentiment are the most impressive. The following was told by a student of the emotions as evidence of the close alliance between humor and pathos:

"The drunkard sat on the curb with his

shaggy head resting on his chest. Around him danced the village urchins, spearing him with sticks and jests. Suddenly the sot raised his head—the crowd scattered—one of the boys recognized the drunkard as his own father.”

Unusual stories and anecdotes tend to shock. The following quotation from Dr. W. Hanna Thompson is an excellent instance of the power of the unusual. Speaking of the Roman Seneca and his base nature, Dr. Thompson writes:

“. . . he (Seneca) was the man who scandalized even the hardened cynics of Nero’s Rome by rising in the Senate to eulogize Nero for ripping open the body of his mother to see the womb that bore him.”

If you would make an idea impressive, you must make the audience give more thought to it than it ordinarily would in a short, cursory exposition. By dwelling on it, by repeating it, by using impressive words, you enlarge the attention given the idea.

The short Anglo-Saxon words are usually preferable to the Latinized ones. The Bible and Lincoln’s speeches owe part of their liter-

ary immortality to the superiority of the short, terse quality of simple words. But for purposes of impressiveness it is sometimes advantageous to use the longer word. To say that cigarette smoking by little girls is *nasty* expresses the idea very well, but to say that it is *disgusting* adds an impressiveness. Likewise, to call a spectacle *stupendous* gives an emphasis which the word *grand* lacks. The reason for this superiority is the greater number of syllables and therefore the greater space of time in which the adjective occupies the attention of the hearers.

Repetition of an idea gains impressiveness for the same reason. Notice how the cumulation of evidence in the following paragraph hammers the thought home:

“The Germans had no scruples of conscience in waging war. When the invasion of peaceful Belgium was protested in the name of neutrality, the answer was, ‘A mere scrap of paper!’ When Woodrow Wilson penned his protest against the use of the submarine, the answer was, ‘Stay off the seas!’ When aged fathers tried to shelter their daughters from

the invading hordes, the penalty consisted of forcing them to witness the violation of their offspring on the open street."

Repetition may take the form of continuous reassertion as in the last instance or it may be a recurrence at stated intervals throughout the speech. In either case, effectiveness is best gained by a climactic sequence in which each succeeding repetition is more striking than the last.

### *The Argumentative Speech*

The argumentative speech aims to persuade an audience to accept the speaker's belief. Where speakers representing different sides of a question present their arguments to the same audience, the contest is called a debate. Such contests require a strict adherence to formal rules, and the speaking takes the form of a cold, mathematical appeal to reason. But the object of a speaker in a debate is to adduce a greater amount of evidence in support of his contention than his opponent does. And his efforts are judged by men who are sworn to weigh his arguments from an unprejudiced

viewpoint. But the average argumentative speech must do more. It must not only present reasons, it must secure belief.

The cardinal rule for gaining acceptance of any belief is to liken that belief with one or more already accepted by the audience. The following paragraph from a speech by an advocate of the League of Nations illustrates the application of this rule:

“The opponents of the League have spent many words on the argument that whatever benefits may be derived from its adoption will be purchased at the cost of our American liberties. All government means the loss of certain rights. Flourish a revolver on Broadway, New York City, and, unless you have a permit, you will soon find yourself accompanying a gentleman in blue to the nearest police station. Where is your liberty? But the next day, if you are fortunate enough to secure bail, that same policeman may save your life from the assaults of a thug. Would you give up that protection to regain the liberty of carrying arms? The next time you pay taxes on your real estate, you will find on examining the bill

that some of the money collected goes to the State of New York. You cannot deduct that amount from the bill. Where is your liberty? But the money which goes outside your county helps to keep the state roads in repair. You may go anywhere in the State without paying tolls to cross bridges and without being held up as a possible alien. Would you relinquish these enjoyments to regain the right to refuse to pay taxes? Recently, the United States Supreme Court told New York that it could not tax residents of other states at a greater rate than it taxed us. Where is our liberty of taxing non-residents? But that same Federal Government stations representatives all over the world to protect us when we travel on business or pleasure. At the cost of millions of dollars and men, it prevented an ambitious conqueror from implanting the German language on our land. Are the benefits worth the cost?

“The advocates of the League would go a step farther. They would protect us from the ravages of war, they would save us billions of dollars that now go into engines of destruction,

they would insure freedom to business all over the world. What is the cost! Simply the loss of those rights which we have long ago contributed to the cause of law and order in order to secure the blessings of peace and happiness."

The value of repetition and suggestion has been discussed in a previous chapter. There remains one other important means of securing acceptance. The citing of testimony from some well known man is a very effective aid. Nearly every great political leader has relied upon the opinions of deceased statesmen as arguments in favor of his stand on important measures. In defending his formation of the Progressive Party, Roosevelt continually quoted Lincoln's views on party loyalty and likened his leaving of the Republican Party to Lincoln's entrance into the same party. Nearly every Senator who opposed our entrance into the League of Nations quoted Washington's warning against entangling alliances.

### *The Appealing Speech*

The purpose of the appealing speech is to secure action—the highest and most difficult

goal of all. The man who can get an audience to do his will is not only an orator, he is a leader. This power is a function of many things,—personality, reputation, and all the virtues of speaking that are part of the orator's equipment. But much may be gained by learning how to direct the appeal.

Why do men toil, why do they perform any act requiring the expenditure of effort? Such a question propounded to six men on the street would probably produce six answers, each fitting what that man wanted most at that particular time. But if those six were to come together and compare their answers, they would probably agree on one common aim in life—to live happily. But happiness is the result of satisfying wants and desires. In order, then, to secure action through appeal, we must show the audience that the line of conduct we would have them pursue will satisfy one or more of their desires.

Man's wants are many. Primitive man wanted only food, clothing, shelter and a helpmate. But, as students of advertising point out, the advancement of civilization increases

the complexity of life and the resulting wants and needs of mankind. To name specifically all these wants and needs would require the space of a small dictionary. But for the purpose of the speaker, it will suffice to name the seven classes in which these wants may be grouped. The order in which they are named is an arbitrary one and does not signify their relative importance.

I.—“*Self-preservation* is the first law of nature,” is a much quoted maxim, often used to explain the selfishness of human beings. But it is instinctive, and if we are to judge man by the animal kingdom in general, it is the first law of conduct. But whether it is first or last, it is an important factor in the life of all. The erection of houses, the care of the body, the caution in times and places of danger, the appropriations for military defenses—all are testimonials of the desire for self-preservation. Appeal, therefore, to any one of the countless desires flowing from this instinct, and you are sure to set in motion some human act.

II.—“*Love* rules the world.” The psycho-

analyst Freud attributes all human thinking and action to the attraction of the opposite sex. But love in the sense in which we use it embraces all the affection which we hold for persons and institutions outside of self—relatives, friends, and country. The love for each varies according to the degree of relationship and the number of interests in common. For the love of kin, men toil from morning to night and sometimes sacrifice all personal ambitions; for the love of friends men risk their worldly possessions; for the love of country, men brave death on the battlefield.

III.—*Property.* The desire to accumulate money or its equivalent is to be found in every race and climate. The very possession of it, apart from the things it can buy, is an aim common to nearly all of us. Show any man how he can increase his income, save money and become financially independent, and he will “prick up his ears.” The accumulation of property may be frowned upon as a vain purpose, but cannot be ignored as a mainspring of human endeavor.

IV.—*Knowledge and Power.* The desire

for light and the desire for power are so closely interwoven that we put them in one heading. A man's knowledge is so small that the need of it is eternal. "Knowledge is power," links the two in a manner which indicates that the latter is the stronger of the two. Power is that desire that prompts men to labor incessantly in order to develop superior skill in their business or profession, thus giving them mastery over others. It is this motive that leads kings to wage war, statesmen to toil night after night while their health suffers, orators to study the psychology of crowds, scientists to risk their lives in the laboratory to wrest the secrets from nature, and capitalists to die in the saddle long after they have provided for themselves and their heirs unto the third and fourth generation. Call it the lust of power if you will, but few men who once taste it are able to lay it down.

V.—*Good Name.* "I care not what others may think of me; I shall follow my conscience." How often have we heard that remark? It is a noble thought—one which admits of little argument. And yet, the very

mentioning of “what others think of me” is evidence of this ever-present consideration. Even those who risk their good names to follow certain ideas usually attempt at some later date to win back that good name by explaining why they acted as they did. Which proves that the desire for a good reputation is rarely extinguished.

“Good name in man and woman, dear my lord,  
Is the immediate jewel of their souls:  
Who steals my purse steals trash; 'tis some-  
thing, nothing;  
'Twas mine, 'tis his, and has been slave to  
thousands;  
But he that filches from me my good name  
Robs me of that which not enriches him  
And makes me poor indeed.”

—*IAGO to Othello.*

VI.—*Emotions.* There are certain strong emotions which once aroused, impel action. The love of justice, kindness, generosity and self-respect, and the hatred of despotism, dishonesty, cowardice and kindred vices are some

of the feelings so strong that all of us find ourselves at times slaves to their influence.

VII.—*Beliefs.* We all know that religion and politics are tabooed as subjects for discussion at dinners and other social gatherings. And the reason is that the average individual holds his ideas on each so closely to his heart that if you hit either, you wound the whole man. Men will die for their religious faith; they will part company with their best friends because of political differences. It is a factor which must never be used by the speaker unless he is sure to offend no one; for it is a double-edged sword.

If it were possible to determine in some psychological laboratory the proportionate strength of each of the seven groups in every man, we would find an amazing variety of results. But the speaker's task is to appeal to the collective and not the individual man. The best plan is to send your appeal through all seven channels—then you are sure to reach all on some one appeal. If that plan is not feasible you must select your channels with three considerations in mind: (1) the charac-

ter of the audience; (2) the subject, and (3) the appeal which you are best fitted to make. The latter consideration will depend largely on your individual philosophy of life and human conduct.

## CHAPTER IV.

### SCOPE OF THE SPEECH

To the speaker making his first address, seconds pass like hours, and minutes crawl like months. But close on the heels of that first realization of confidence comes the complaint, "I can't cover my subject in the allotted time." It's a healthy complaint—a growing pain—notwithstanding the faults which it confesses.

The trouble, of course, lies with the speaker's preparation. The man who does not plan his speech with careful consideration of the time allotted is little better than the railroad official who publishes a time table without taking into consideration the speed of the trains. Anyone who attends dinners knows that not all such men are in public speaking classes, but they ought to be. Nothing is more boring than a speaker who lacks "terminal facilities." On the other hand, a speaker who covers his point in the given time is always in demand. One

of the most pleasant features of the fall opening at Hamilton College is the talk given by Elihu Root—one point, briefly but comprehensively expressed, in about three minutes.

What are the causes of failure in this regard? Lack of experience? Yes, but even the most inexperienced speaker can succeed in avoiding this transgression by observing two laws: first, make your introduction as short as possible; second, don't try to cover too much ground. The first will be treated at length in a subsequent chapter; the second will suffice for this.

A student reads of the immense cost of maintaining our army and navy, and that disarmament would save every man, woman and child in the United States many dollars each year. He decides to use that subject for his next three-minute talk before the class. Very good! But in turning the subject over in his mind, he thinks of many other arguments for disarmament—prevention of wars, saving of life, business stability. The subject is continually enlarging, like a snow-ball rolling down a mountain side. The probable result

is that he attempts to present the whole cause of disarmament in three minutes. Can it be done? Yes, if he is content to make his speech a mere table of contents. Had he confined himself to the one phase of the subject, he could have made an incisive, comprehensive appeal.

A former Supreme Court Judge of New York expressed the opinion that the successful lawyers in our appellate courts confine their oral arguments to the strongest point in their briefs, and are content to hammer home that one point. The same practice is followed by successful campaigners, salesmen and clergymen. Instead of spreading yourself over an acre, pick out the high spot and confine yourself to that area.

An excellent method of limiting the scope of your talk is to speak or write to a friend something like the following:

“I am going to give a three-minute talk to-morrow evening on the battleship of the future. My purpose is to convince the audience that our new dreadnaughts must be protected above as well as below the water-line. I shall sup-

port the assertion by explaining the recent air-bombing tests held off the Atlantic Coast."

Such a condensed statement, spoken or written, has the added advantage of revealing to the writer or speaker the clarity of his thoughts.

## CHAPTER V.

### PREPARING THE SPEECH—PART ONE

#### *Importance of Preparation*

There is so much misunderstanding about “extemporaneous” speaking that it is unfortunate that the word ever became associated with the art. The dictionary defines the adjective as “done or made with little or no preparation; offhand.” Strictly speaking, there is no such thing. Of course, there are men and women who have a certain gift for concealing their ignorance by glibly discussing a subject in lofty, voluble language that fills the ear and decoys the mind from thought, as the Lorelei lured the German boatmen from the stream. The unthinking listener becomes a victim of that pernicious philosophy that teaches you can get something for nothing. He sometimes joins a public speaking class with the hope that some secret short-cut will teach him to stand on a platform, open his mouth and enthral any audience on any subject. Such

men could employ their time and money to better advantage by inventing a perpetual motion machine.

Great speeches have been delivered without the speaker's preparing for the particular occasion. But in every such case, the effort coupled a previous mastery of the thought with a well-developed ability in self-expression. Daniel Webster's greatest speech was his Reply to Hayne. The mellow orator of the Union had just completed the argument of a case in the Supreme Court and walked into the Senate Chamber to find the spokesman of the South making an impassionate plea for State sovereignty. Webster took up the challenge and met the issue with that masterful argument which ended with, "Liberty and union, now and forever, one and inseparable." A friend later remarked, "I didn't think that even you could make such an extemporaneous speech!" and Webster replied with a smile, "I have been preparing that speech all my life!"

A great speech requires great thoughts and great expression. The latter is skill, but the

former is a possession which means study and work. A speech can be no better than the thinking it expresses. Be sure, therefore, that you have something to give before you attempt to exhibit the generosity of your eloquence.

### *Collecting Material*

The selection of a subject indicates, or should indicate, that the speaker has given sufficient thought to the subject to warrant the choice. He should have, therefore, enough material to guide him in collecting more. The man who wants to do his best, however, will never go on the platform with a mere handful of facts and thoughts. He will read and read, and think and think. The more material collected the greater is the field from which to select, and the greater the reserve the greater the confidence. The man who goes into a business venture with a comfortable bank balance has many reasons for success.

It is surprising how much material may be gained from the day's experience by keeping the subject somewhere in the mind. The good fisherman focuses his attention on the task,

but it does no harm to tow the line while moving from place to place.

Douglas Mathewson, former Borough President of the Bronx, New York City, once told a class in public speaking that his ability to fill so many speaking engagements was due to a plan he had followed from youth. He kept a notebook of speaking material. It contained jokes, anecdotes, extracts from books, magazines and newspaper articles, and all sorts of general information which might be used in a public address. By looking over this book a few minutes before leaving home to speak, he would get enough suggestions to frame a speech to suit the occasion.

This is not given as a model, but it contains a suggestion that the ambitious speaker will follow. One of the greatest evils in public speaking classes is the lack of preparation on the part of many men. How a man can expect to get the most out of a course without expending a reasonable amount of effort in preparation is difficult to understand. If you are given to procrastination, here is a bit of advice: pick your subject for next week's talk

before you retire on the evening of your last. While undressing, decide on what you are going to say. Force yourself to give a few minutes of each day to it. You will find that your ideas, like snow-balls rolling down a hill, gain size and form each day.

But the best plan is to keep as far ahead of your appearances as you can. Professional writers and speakers often keep a cabinet of manila envelopes in which they place all sorts of clippings and notes on which they intend to write or speak. Once the habit of collecting data in this fashion is formed, the envelopes are soon bulging with material. Ida N. Tarbell once told a class in short story writing that this plan worked so well, that she could write an article from her collections in a very short time. You should adopt right now some modification of this plan. Here is a beginning:

“I never let an idea escape me, but write it on a piece of paper and put it in a drawer. In that way I sometimes save my best thoughts on a subject.”

—ABRAHAM LINCOLN.

*Selecting Material*

Experience in speaking gives a man a sixth sense for appraising the value of any given material. The beginner must learn the art of keeping and discarding. He can be helped, however, by following two rules: first, use only such material as is strictly relevant to the subject; second, never employ material which awakens the interest of the audience in another subject. In applying these rules, an excellent practice is to focus the attention on the particular material, apart from the subject. If the main idea leads you into a channel of thought other than the theme of your speech, discard it. The second rule may well be illustrated by the following example:

A speaker preparing a talk on grit came across the following:

“De man dat succeeds,” said Uncle Eben, “is de one dat has de grit to git up every mornin’ and put ditto marks under his New Year’s resolutions.”

The quotation certainly suggests grit, but it also leads the mind of the reader to the

subject of good resolutions. With the interest in the latter awakened, it is likely that the audience will be led into that channel of thought and carry its subconscious ideas of resolutions throughout the remainder of the speech.

## CHAPTER VI.

### PREPARING THE SPEECH—PART TWO

#### *Arranging the Material*

A speech may be divided into three parts—introduction, body and conclusion. In short speeches, this division is sometimes hard to make, but the three parts are there, nevertheless. The importance of the first and third was very forcefully stated in the humorous advice of Victor Murdock: “Get a good beginning and a good ending; stuff it with whatever you please.” Opening and closing a speech present peculiar problems and for that reason we will consider them later.

*Body.* Having selected the material, the next step is to arrange it in the most effective order. This brings up a question of delivery which might well be mentioned now. The beginning speaker, fearful of his memory, is tempted to write out the address and memorize it—a dangerous practice. There are so many reasons against such a procedure that a de-

tailed presentation of the arguments would fill a volume of this size. But at this point it is only necessary to state that the practice quickly ripens into a habit which makes the speaker a slave to it. The better practice is to write out an outline and memorize it. In arranging that outline we are guided by rules which are readily deducted from the study of plays, novels, essays or short stories.

The first rule is that of order. No audience wants to work out a picture puzzle; it has little patience with the speaker who jumbles his thoughts and shuffles his facts. All the material should be arranged in groups, just as the automobile manufacturer assembles nuts, bolts and plates into parts before putting together the whole machine. The order of the groups should, in turn, show method. It is impossible to lay down any precise rules which will enable the speaker to determine the order. Each speaker must follow his own good sense in this phase of the construction. But he should keep in mind the viewpoint of the audience. It is always a good plan to state facts before theories, arguments before ap-

peal, evidence before conclusion. A speech which is essentially narrative need not proceed in strictly chronological sequence. Have you ever noticed that most stories begin in the middle of the action, then jump to the beginning and carry the tale to the end? The same is permissible and advantageous in the spoken story.

—The second rule is to arrange the material in the most effective order. That means that the climax should come near the end. Many speakers summarize all they have to say in two or three sentences, and then fill out the time by repeating the same ideas with no additions or illuminating illustrations. This method (or lack of method) of discharging all your real ammunition on the first salvo results in a weak finish, which offsets much of whatever strength lay in the beginning. The theatre-goer who knows how the play will end will never follow the action with the same interest that is borne of the curiosity to know the solution of the problem. Read the last chapter of a book and you will not have the patience to read the middle. The well-arranged

speech leaves the best thrills for the end, and thus intensifies the attention and interest of the audience as the time passes.

The third rule is to relieve the tension of the audience by following each striking point with lighter and less serious material. The dramatist plans his action so that humor or light dialogue rests the audience after each thrill. Shakespeare brought on the drunken porter immediately after Macbeth had killed Duncan; Juliet's nurse prevented the fires of tension from burning themselves out. Like the progress of the incoming tide, each big wave is followed by a recession that makes the next greater than the preceding. Psychology shows that the attention is not a continuous flow of heightened tension; it comes in waves. If the demand on the focus of the audience's attention is greater than the supply, the point snaps off and leaves a dull surface.

### *Introduction*

The relation of the introduction to the body of the speech is such an important consideration that the opening remarks can be best

framed after the body has been well prepared and arranged. The function of an introduction is to introduce. That is its main purpose. But there are two other virtues.

First, an introduction should be brief. Second, it should secure attention. Some men are so constituted that they cannot begin any speech without tracing the world's history from the Garden of Eden, and long after their time is up they reach the creation of Eve. We live in such a rapid age, quick action is so imperative, that no speaker should try the patience of an audience by too long an overture. Select your key before you approach the door and unlock it with speed if not haste.

Notice how advertisements are worded so as to attract attention at the very beginning. How often do you pass by a short story because the title or the opening paragraph fails to arouse your interest? If the writer is a successful one, he has probably spent more time in writing the beginning than he has on any other part of equal length in the entire story.

There are countless ways of making the opening remarks interesting. The following

are merely a few of the methods commonly used by average speakers.

*Story.* You have probably heard that it is not good form to begin a speech with a story. The reason back of this rule, if it may be considered a rule, is the abuse of this means of securing attention. Many men go out of their way to begin with a story, regardless of whether the story has or has not a good connection with the speech as a whole. Such a practice is just as cheap as the vaudeville stunt of saving a poor act by dragging out the American flag at the close. Telling a story is not the most dignified method of beginning an address, but if it is in point and its spirit is in keeping with the speech, there is no substantial objection to it. By story, of course, we mean some piece of fiction.

\ *Quotation.* A quotation—prose or poetry—from the writings of some great man or woman is an excellent opener. We are always interested in successful people and cannot get enough of their opinions. When we hear well-known people quoted, we unconsciously pay the person quoting some of the respect and

admiration we hold for the person quoted. Sometimes in quoting poetry it is better to omit the name of the poet, particularly when the lines are well known. Here, again, the quotation should have a real connection with what follows. If the audience gets the impression that you are dragging in a story or quotation by the ears simply for its effect on them, you will soon feel its resentment.

Startling Statements. We have all heard such opening remarks as, "The majority is always wrong"; "Every man is a potential murderer"; "Might makes right." Such statements never fail to arouse an audience to attention. Whether because of the sweeping character of the remark or because of the paradox, we sit up and listen to what follows. But when you use this method, be sure that you satisfy the curiosity it arouses. Unless your succeeding statements explain its meaning to the satisfaction of the audience, your startling statement will prove a boomerang.

History. Some interesting fact or anecdote from history, particularly when it centers around a well-known personality, is probably

the best method of opening an address. There is something about the past which holds a charm for all. And when we hear a man go back into history we instinctively increase our respect for his knowledge and ability.

*4*      Personal Experiences are always welcome. An audience is always eager to pry into the life and habits of the man addressing it. By taking them into your confidence, you increase their interest in you. The average speaker is far too modest in his aversion to the use of the first person.

*5*      Outline. Sometimes, when the subject matter or the lack of time makes the ordinary introduction inadvisable, it is proper to open by setting forth in brief, crisp fashion the purpose of your speech, the main headings and your method of presentation. This is the method of the debater and the lawyer in his opening remarks to the jury. The plain, frank character of this method holds a certain appeal to the average man in the audience. It should commend itself to the speaker when it is desirable above all to win the confidence of the hearers in his simple, above-board attitude.

In using any of the foregoing methods, be careful of two things. First, do not select an introduction which is so much more interesting or so much more important in subject matter than the remainder of your speech, that it will put you at a disadvantage in holding the attention. In other words, the tail should not wag the dog. Second, an introduction should never antagonize any part of the audience. This is particularly important when your speech is argumentative. Frequently a political talker will open with a partisan remark which closes the ears of every neutral in the audience. In every argument there is common ground. Begin there and gradually turn the attention to your side of the issue. There is, however, one exception to this rule. Where your audience is openly hostile, an initial "blow between the eyes" will sometimes secure more attention and respect than honeyed phrases. A classic example of this happened in the national campaign of 1900. As the Republican candidate for vice-president, Roosevelt was sent into Nebraska, the home of Bryan and Free Silver. The audience at one meeting was as hostile

as a group of Bolsheviks would be at a directors' meeting. A death-like silence, like the calm before a storm, greeted the speaker's arrival. He broke the tension with these words, biting off each syllable with characteristic precision:

“Ladies and Gentlemen: The Republican Party stands for the Gold Standard; and it stands for the Gold Standard in the State of Nebraska just as it stands for the Gold Standard in the State of New York.”

The audience burst into tears.

### *Conclusion*

Orators of the old school made a great deal of the peroration. They always worked out a closing appeal with a view to stirring the emotions of the audience to the highest pitch. Time has changed the popularity of this practice, but the need of a strong ending is still present and always will be. The last paragraph of a speech is like the last course of a dinner. If it is bad, it destroys much of the joy that went before; if it is good, we leave the table with that contented feeling which

tends to wipe out the memory of everything unpleasant that preceded it.

It is difficult to give concrete directions for closing a speech. But a few rules will help. Above all, the ending should be strong with ring and sting. Where it is possible, the last paragraph should summarize and tie together all that has been said in the body of the speech, so as to make the unity of the whole stand out. Where the purpose of the speech is to secure action, the closing remarks should take the form of an appeal.

Here is one instance where an exception to the rule against memorizing your speech might be pleaded. Webster's command of oratorical language was so masterful, that he rarely paid any attention to the exact words he would use until he got on his feet. But he always worked out and memorized a strong closing paragraph.

Another suggestion might be made here. It is always profitable to leave an audience in a happy frame of mind. A happy closing sentence might win applause for an otherwise mediocre address. In talking to an entering

class at Hamilton College, Elihu Root selected as his subject the effect of education on the physical beauty of the face. He told them how knowledge and wisdom threw a certain charm over the features of the ugly, and how mental stagnation and ignorance clouded the attractiveness of the face of perfect proportions. The speech was a bit abstract, but the closing sentence left a feeling which is still remembered by those who heard it:

“I hope you will all grow in wisdom and truth until your beauty will surpass that of the president and faculty of Hamilton College.”

## CHAPTER VII.

### LINES OF DEVELOPMENT

The preceding chapters have dealt only with those principles of speech construction which the beginner can appreciate and apply. This chapter aims to open the door to new fields of improvement and development.

#### *Importance of Clear Thinking*

Language is but a means to an end; it is only a vehicle for thought. Unless the speaker has something worth while to say, the highly developed transportation system is of little use. Is the product of your thinking worth the freight? Yes, provided it is the product of your best thinking. Nature never repeats. The Creator has given every being a certain individuality which makes his thinking different from that of every other being. But few have the faith, the courage and the industry to dig deep enough into the mine of their own brains to find the precious metal.

Two of the greatest thinkers in American history have bequeathed to us the secret of their power:

“When I got on such a hunt for an idea, and until I got it, or I thought I had got it, I was not satisfied until I had repeated it over and over, until I had put it in language plain enough, as I thought, for any boy I knew to comprehend. This was a kind of passion with me. It has stuck by me, for I am never easy now when I am handling a case until I have bounded it north, and bounded it south, and bounded it east, and bounded it west.”

—ABRAHAM LINCOLN.

“Men give me some credit for genius. All the genius I have lies in this: When I have a subject in hand, I study it profoundly. Day and night it is before me. I explore it in all its bearings. My mind becomes pervaded with it. Then the effort which I make is what the people are pleased to call the fruits of genius. It is the fruit of labor and thought.”

—ALEXANDER HAMILTON.

The speaker must see the idea clearly with his own mind's eye before he can hope to make it apparent to the mental vision of others. He must examine the subject from every angle — above, below and around — probing every inch of the ground by self-questioning. Discussion of a subject with a friend enables the speaker to detach himself from the ideas and to see them from a new viewpoint. He sometimes finds that his own ears are good critics in detecting the shallowness of his thinking or the flaws of his reasoning. Above all, the practice will reveal the degree of clearness which the ideas have assumed.

In order to get the benefit of many viewpoints, some speakers and writers make it a practice never to part with a subject until they have considered it for a certain length of time and during every part of the day. Experience teaches all that the problem which seems fraught with obstacles at night takes on a hopeful appearance when viewed in the morning, and many a morning's worry fades to a shadow when considered by lamplight. Each

speaker must study his own nature and make the most of his knowledge of self.

### *Rhetoric*

Rhetoric has been defined as the art of writing or speaking effectively. It embraces all phases of discourse—vocabulary, grammar, style, figures of speech, etc. Inasmuch as we are considering oral discourse alone, we can eliminate such elements as punctuation and spelling. We are training the ear and not the eye.

### *Reading Aloud*

Modern methods of teaching languages in our schools would seem to indicate that the Creator gave each race a set of rules of grammar with instructions to build up a language in accordance therewith. Students labor for hours over the study of syntax, write pages and pages of composition, and then proceed to butcher their mother tongue in conversation outside the class-room. The fault lies in the failure to follow in teaching the great truth that language is a science of the ear and

not of the eye. A child who hears good English in the home will speak good English even though he never learns a single rule of grammar. His ear has been trained to the music of the language and does not need to apply rules in order to detect a discord.

The shortest cut to the mastery of good English is the cultivation of the habit of reading aloud passages from standard authors. Make that the basis of your study of the language. The style of oral discourse differs from that of written discourse. It is preferable, therefore, to read the works of great speakers—Burke, Hamilton, Webster or Lincoln.

### *Vocabulary*

A good vocabulary means something more than the ability to define a large number of words; it means the ability and practice of using those words in writing or speaking. Increasing one's vocabulary necessitates systematic labor. Most masters of English employ some scheme of daily effort in adding new words to their list. There is a simple method

which everyone can follow to advantage. When you chance upon a word which is new or which you are not accustomed to use, look up its meaning in a dictionary. When you are satisfied that its meaning is clear to you, use it in four or five sentences. By uttering the word aloud, you make it your own, and you will be surprised to find that you will probably have use for it before the day is over.

A refined use of the mother tongue demands not only a large stock of words but discrimination in their selection. Every word has certain shades of meaning which no other single word possesses. If you would acquire this refined choice of words, consult a book of synonyms and antonyms. Take, for instance, the word *emissary*. The ordinary dictionary defines it as a *spy* or *scout*. Fernald's "English Synonyms, Antonyms and Prepositions" groups *spy*, *detective*, *emissary* and *scout* under one heading, with this explanation:

"The *scout* and the *spy* are both employed to obtain information of the numbers, movements, etc., of an enemy. The *scout* lurks on the outskirts of the hostile army with such

concealment as the case admits of, but without disguise; a *spy* enters in disguise within the enemy's lines. A *scout*, if captured, has the rights of a prisoner of war; a *spy* is held to have forfeited all rights, and is liable, in case of capture, to capital punishment. An *emissary* is rather political than military; sent rather to secretly influence opponents than to bring information concerning them; so far as he does the latter, he is not only an *emissary*, but a *spy*."

There is no study more fascinating than the study of words. Once begun, the habit of inquiring into the precise meaning of the units of language becomes irresistible.

### *Grammar*

The rules of grammar are so numerous that unless the student has had a good grounding in the science the better method of learning good usage is to train the ear to the sounds of correct English. Silent reading is of some help, but the number of students who pass written examinations in English with flying colors and then proceed to violate every rule

in conversation indicates the necessity of teaching grammar as an oral rather than as a visual science. Some of the more common errors have been illustrated in the following sentences. In each case, the second is the correct one. Read it aloud at least six times in order to accustom the ear and the lips to the correct usage.

1. I don't know, he *don't* know, you don't know.
2. I don't know, he *doesn't* know, you don't know.
  
1. Between you and *I*, the company is bankrupt.
2. Between you and *me*, the company is bankrupt.
  
1. When I hear of *you* going, I shall follow.
2. When I hear of *your* going, I shall follow.
  
1. It is *me*.
2. It is *I*.
  
1. He runs too *slow* for the team.
2. He runs too *slowly* for the team.
  
1. He is not *near* so tall as I am.
2. He is not *nearly* so tall as I am.
  
1. Such a course is *no* use.
2. Such a course is *of no* use.
  
1. You *better* prepare before speaking.
2. You *had better* prepare before speaking.

1. Last night we *come* home in the rain.
2. Last night we *came* home in the rain.

1. *Those* kind always *fail*.
2. *That* kind always *fails*, or  
*Those kinds* always *fail*.

1. I don't know *as* I would say that.
2. I don't know *that* I would say that.

1. The size of audiences *vary*.
2. The size of audiences *varies*.

1. *Between* the three of them there was but five dollars.
2. *Among* the three of them there was but five dollars.

1. He is up *to* the theatre.
2. He is *at* the theatre.

1. He has been thrown *in* the pit.
2. He has been thrown *into* the pit.

1. *Can* I have permission to inspect it?
2. *May* I have permission to inspect it?

1. I don't care what you think of me, I *shall* speak and you *will* listen.
2. I don't care what you think of me, I *will* speak and you *shall* listen.

1. He went *like* he came.
2. He went *as* he came.

1. He *hadn't ought* to swim in such places.
2. He *ought not* to swim in such places.
1. *To safely cross* the river in such weather requires good seamanship.
2. *To cross* the river *safely* in such weather requires good seamanship.
1. I will *either hire* you on commission *or* on straight salary.
2. I will hire you *either* on commission *or* on straight salary.
1. I think I shall *lay* down for an hour.
2. I think I shall *lie* down for an hour.
1. He would *of* done it, had I permitted it.
2. He would *have* done it, had I permitted it.
1. Stand *in back of* him.
2. Stand *behind* him.
1. I saw *them* girls yesterday.
2. I saw *those* girls yesterday.
1. He *who* I trusted has deceived me.
2. He *whom* I trusted has deceived me.

### *Style*

Style is the manner of expressing thoughts in language. It has little to do with thinking; it is only concerned with the means of

putting the product of the brain into tangible form. The artist has a vision; the manner in which he uses his brushes, his colors and his canvas to portray that vision in concrete form is his style of painting. The speaker has thoughts and feelings and the tools of language; the manner in which he uses the tools to interpret the creation of his mind and soul is his style.

There is no standard style; as each man's thinking is different from that of every other man, so must his manner of using what tools of language he possesses be distinctive. The problem of perfecting one's style is a problem of acquainting one's self with the various implements of language and of attaining skill in the use of these implements. The latter is largely a question of practice and experience, but the former can be acquired by the study of language in general.

The best style to cultivate is your own. In fact, you cannot cultivate any other. "Use what language you will," says Emerson, "you can never say anything but what you are." But that does not mean that you can perfect

your style by confining your study to yourself. Greece, Rome, Spain and England reached the height of their civilization by profiting from the successes and failures of other civilizations. Burke, Webster and Lincoln studied and analyzed the best works of the best minds, and used the materials thus gained in the construction of their own works. No man has ever attained perfection in any art without making use of the experiences of others. This is not imitation. The difference between the imitator and the creator is that the imitator is content to put a thin coat of paint over the house of another and call it his own, while the creator goes over the house, makes a note of all the desirable features and ideas, and makes use of these best ideas in improving the plans of his own.

In acquiring and perfecting the use of the tools of language, the speaker should keep in mind the two cardinal virtues of good style—instant intelligibility and effectiveness. Unless the audience can instantly perceive and appreciate the expression, the speaker's words are like so much indigestible food in the

stomach. And unless that food possesses nourishment, it has no stimulating effect upon the mind and body.

How can a speaker acquire the tools of effective style? Simply by studying and analyzing the work of other speakers. Let us take a paragraph from an address on Roosevelt and investigate some of the means by which a speaker secures effect:

“The secret of Roosevelt’s greatness was his boundless courage. Boldness stamped itself on every deed in the Rough Rider’s career. The marvelous physique which enabled the ex-President to push into the darkest regions of Africa and Brazil was not a gift of birth, but the trophy of a youth’s battle with asthma and a sickly constitution. His second election to the New York Assembly—his first political victory—was the answer to a challenge of the organization that would have shattered the spirit of an ordinary warrior. As Police Commissioner, when his program of reform evoked dire threats from the underworld, he carried out his orders by personal visits to the caves of lawlessness—at night. When the

arrogant Kaiser, like the bully of the street, gathered around him the nations of Europe in an attempt to frighten little Venezuela into submission, he encountered not the gloved hand of a diplomat sparring for time while the typewriters clicked out feeble protests, but the clenched fist of Theodore Roosevelt, ready to strike. Well chosen were the words of his son Archie when Death had stabbed him in the dark: "The old lion is dead."

I.—*Unity*. The entire paragraph deals with but one idea—the courage of Roosevelt as the main cause of his greatness. Nothing leads the mind into any other channel of thought.

II.—*Repetition*. The first sentence expresses the key-note of the paragraph. The thought, however, is strengthened by repetition in the second. The remaining sentences develop the idea by citing specific instances in his career in support of the general statement in the first and second. Notice how each succeeding instance is more striking than the last, thus strengthening the assertion by climactic arrangement.

III.—*Sentences*. No sentence ends weakly.

The gist of the thought comes at the end, thereby keeping up the interest of the reader until the last word is spoken.

IV.—*Concreteness.* Every sentence is expressed in words which call up distinct mental images. The reader need not expend more than a minimum amount of mental energy to grasp the thought.

V.—*Figures of Speech.* “Death had stabbed him in the dark” is a figure of speech known as personification because it attributes to inanimate things the characteristics of living beings. “Like the bully of the street” is a simile. A simile is a figure of speech which compares one thing with another. A better illustration of this figure can be found in the sentence, “A man without ambition is like a bird without wings.” When the comparison is implied, the figure is known as a metaphor; “he can never soar in the heights above, but must walk like a weakling, unnoticed, with the crowd below.”

The figure “The old lion is dead” is called an epithet, a very effective means of comparison. A recent writer referred to Joffre as

“The Gibraltar of the Marne,” another excellent illustration of epithet.

The purpose of figures of speech is to secure clearness or emphasis and to stir the imagination. The speaker who uses his imagination to bring forth fresh comparisons has a very effective weapon in speaking. To quote Oliver Wendell Holmes:

“There is no power I envy so much—as that of seeing analogues and making comparisons. I don’t understand how it is that some minds are continually coupling thoughts or objects that seem not in the least related to each other, until all at once they are put in a certain light and you wonder that you did not always see that they were as like as a pair of twins. It appears to me a sort of miraculous gift.”

## CHAPTER VIII.

### QUESTIONNAIRE

The value of self-questioning as a means of putting forth your best effort cannot be overestimated. It is a necessary habit for all whose goal is perfection. The following questionnaire is not designed as a guide in preparing the speech, although it may be used as such. But it does give the student a series of checks that will enable him to criticize and improve his preparation before delivery. It is purposely brief. The ambitious student will make the most of his experience and that of others by constructing a questionnaire that will remind him of his shortcomings and weaknesses.

#### *Subject*

##### A. *Scope*

1. What is the subject of your speech? Can you summarize it in one compact sentence?

2. Are you trying to cover too much ground? Can you not strengthen the effect by confining yourself to a smaller division of the subject?

3. Can you cover your point in the allotted time? Have you actually timed its delivery to make sure?

#### B. *Purpose*

1. Which of the five purposes of speaking is yours—entertainment, instruction, impressiveness, persuasion or appeal?

2. State your purpose in one compact sentence. Are you endeavoring to accomplish more than your material and time warrant?

3. Have you given adequate consideration to the character of the audience, the occasion, and the time? Can you visualize all the conditions under which you will speak?

#### *Material*

1. Have you gathered real material for your talk? Or are you relying merely on your feelings to carry you through?

2. Is all your material in keeping with your

subject? Does any of it tend to lead the mind of the audience into other channels?

3. *If your aim is entertainment*, have you selected your material with a view to holding the attention every second of the time? Is your humor fresh? Have you made use of such factors as the vital, the uncertain, the unusual, the concrete, the animate, the antagonistic? Will you leave the audience in a happy frame of mind?

4. *If your purpose is instruction*, have you made every point clear? Have you likened the unknown to the known? If you are using technical terms, are they known to your audience? If not, will you make them perfectly clear before using them?

5. *If your purpose is impressiveness*, have you selected material that will "get under the skin"? Will it stir the emotions and feelings of the audience? Have you made full use of repetition? Can you quote a well known man or woman to advantage? Are your illustrations and specific instances striking?

6. *If your purpose is persuasion*, do your arguments prove your point? Considering

each argument separately, does it lead to the conclusion asserted? Have you made use of repetition and suggestion? Can you strengthen your case by citing testimony? Have you reduced your arguments to the simplest terms?

7. *If your purpose is appeal*, have you considered the motives which lead men to act—self-preservation, love, property, knowledge and power, good name, emotions and beliefs? If you cannot use all, have you chosen those you are best fitted to employ? Will they move the particular audience you are to address?

8. Is your material concrete? Does it deal in mental images? Have you considered the mental energy of the audience? Do your illustrations and specific instances come within the knowledge and experience of your hearers?

9. Are your figures of speech fresh? Do they add clearness or emphasis? Do they stir the imagination?

### *Construction*

#### A. *Introduction*

1. Will your opening paragraph secure attention?

2. Is it brief? Can you not shorten it?
3. Does it contain the key-note of your whole talk?
4. Will it antagonize any portion of the audience? Will it secure good-will toward yourself and your subject?
5. If you open with an anecdote, quotation or striking statement, are you sure it is in keeping with the entire speech? Will it arouse an interest or a curiosity which the remainder of your speech will meet?

### B. *Body*

1. Outline your speech in the form of headings and sub-headings. Is the arrangement logical? Will the audience follow your sequence with a minimum of effort? Is your material classified so as to avoid confusion of ideas?
2. Is the speech so arranged as to heighten the interest as it goes along? Does the climax come at the end?
3. Have you rested the mind of the audience by following the high spots with lighter material?

4. Experiment with your arrangement. Put your headings in different order. Can you gain greater clearness and effect by changing the sequence of your paragraphs?

### C. *Conclusion*

1. Does your closing leave a strong impression? Does it drive the point home?
2. Does it summarize all that has gone before?
3. Is it not desirable to write out your ending and memorize it?
4. Does the conclusion leave the audience in the proper frame of mind?
5. Does it tie up with your introduction?

### *Miscellaneous*

1. Have you tested the effectiveness of your speech in conversation?
2. Have you reviewed your speech at various times of the day? Have you tested it from every viewpoint and in every mood?

## CHAPTER IX.

### DELIVERY IN GENERAL

Lord Erskine, England's eloquent barrister, once confessed that when he addressed the court for the first time he was so overcome with confusion that he wanted to sit down. "At that time," he added, "I fancied I could feel my little children tugging at my gown, so I made an effort—went on—and succeeded."

It is doubtful whether Lord Erskine could have bequeathed to posterity a more valuable legacy than that confession. It should fill every beginning speaker with hope. Facing an audience for the first time takes courage; and if a man of Lord Erskine's parts was confused, it is no disgrace for lesser mortals to hesitate. "I made an effort—went on—and succeeded." Those words contain the secret of success in overcoming the hobgoblin of the platform. If the student will make an effort—go on—he is bound to succeed.

In considering the second division of the

subject of speaking—delivery—we are not going to enter any chambers of mystery. Every phase of this branch of the subject has been considered consciously or subconsciously by every normal man. Everyone has applied at some time or other each of the virtues in ordinary conversation. But good speaking requires that we employ them all.

It is a cardinal rule of nature that we lose those faculties which we do not use. The bedridden patient finds on recovering health that his legs will not support his body. The shipwrecked sailor, living alone on an island for a protracted period, must learn again how to talk. Few of us keep alive by daily practice all the virtues of speech and gesticulation. It is necessary, therefore, to call attention to them and to awaken their proper functioning.

Both delivery and composition must act in harmony to perform the one purpose of speaking—to convey to the mind of the listener the thoughts and feelings precisely as they are perceived and felt by the speaker. This necessity for harmony leads us to the first rule for

good delivery—earnestness. Many have propounded the question, “What is the chief asset in good delivery?” And the answer is—earnestness—enthusiasm.

What is earnestness and enthusiasm? Is it not a result rather than a means? Yes and No. When you tell a man to put enthusiasm into his speaking, he is inclined to regard the direction in the same way in which he would receive the advice, “Be rich.” Real enthusiasm in speaking is the result of a gripping of the heart as well as the head. Until the speaker has liyed with his subject a sufficient length of time to realize its importance, he cannot exhibit sincere enthusiasm. Much, therefore, depends upon turning the subject over and over in your mind until you appreciate all the points of contact between it and the occasion. Unless the salesman believes in his article, he cannot hope to attain much success in selling it. But many who believe fail to sell. Here steps in the old adage which bids us to acquire a virtue by assuming it. On first consideration, this sounds like counseling a man to build a roof before digging

the cellar. But experience has proven that when a speaker assumes the virtue of enthusiasm, his real enthusiasm, dormant but never dead, rises to meet, support and join it. Try it. Go on the platform with the attitude that your message is the most important in world's history, and you will soon find that your whole soul is engaged in the task.

When a speaker is enthusiastic, he is necessarily concentrated on his subject. And concentration of the mind gives free play to all the natural movements of the voice and body which we shall discuss.

We have seen that the listener has neither the energy nor the time to go over and over your language, as he can in reading, to grasp your meaning. A speech must make an immediate impression or fail of its object. The elements of delivery which we are about to consider are the means of aiding the audience to grasp the meaning of your words as they are uttered.

Every impression which the outside world makes upon the mind must travel by one of the five senses. Only two of these are avail-

able to the speaker—hearing and seeing. We therefore divide the subject of delivery into two parts—that which affects the ear, and that which affects the eye.

## CHAPTER X.

### ENUNCIATION

Without discussing Roosevelt's place in history as an orator, there is no doubt but that the Colonel was a very effective speaker. Critics mentioned his strong presence, virile gestures and earnestness, but few spoke of the most effective element of his delivery—his precise enunciation. He always spoke in a slow, measured manner that seemed to glory in the beauty of every syllable. The most commonplace words and phrases came from his lips with a force and dignity of meaning that made the idea behind them bristle with life and color.

Our language, the most beautiful in the world, receives cruel treatment from the lips of the average American. Whether because of our disregard for the fine arts or because of the influence of so many foreign-born residents, we are careless and slovenly in our every-day utterance. What is the remedy?

Roosevelt's biographer, William Roscoe Thayer, states that when in college the future President found it very difficult to speak because of asthma. His enunciation was indistinct and his syllables frequently telescoped. But the will to win that transformed a weak body into a powerful machine of muscle and sinew, would not rest until it had turned a defective speech into an exceptionally accurate one. If your enunciation is careless, improve it by concentrating on the task of perfecting it to the highest degree.

Slovenly enunciation is due to the laziness of the muscles of the mouth, tongue and lips, and to improper co-ordination between the positions of the tongue and teeth. Gradually these little muscles of the mouth become soft and weak from lack of exercise. Put them to work, and work them so hard that they will develop a strength that will crave for exercise in every-day utterance. Read aloud the following passage from one of Roosevelt's speeches. Read it in syllables, opening the mouth vertically as well as laterally, and exaggerate the enunciation of every sound:

“It must be un-der-stood, as a mat-ter of course, that if this pow-er is grant-ed it is to be ex-er-cised with wis-dom and cau-tion and self-re-straint. The In-ter-state Com-merce Com-mis-sion or oth-er Gov-ern-ment of-ficial who failed to pro-tect a rail-road that was in the right a-gainst an-y clam-or, no mat-ter how vi-o-lent, on the part of the pub-lic, would be guilt-y of as gross a wrong as if he cor-rupt-ly ren-dered an im-prop-er ser-vi-ce to the rail-road at the ex-pense of the pub-lic. When I say a square deal I mean a square deal; ex-actly as much a square deal for the rich man as for the poor man; but no more. Let each stand on his mer-its, re-ceive what is due him, and be judged ac-cord-ing to his de-serts. To more he is not en-ti-tled, and less he shall not have.”

“I could hear every word he said.” How often have we heard that comment from a member of an audience? Nothing in a speaker’s delivery is more desirable than a clean-cut enunciation that gives full expres-sion to every syllable. But platform speaking demands more careful enunciation than ordi-

nary conversation, so that if you want to acquire this asset in your speaking, you must cultivate greater care in conversation. The habit of reading aloud very slowly enables your ear to detect all the little slurs and flaws of your speech, just as the athlete sees the imperfections in his form when his high jump is reproduced on the screen with the action slowed eight times by means of the ultra-rapid camera. Let a man give three minutes a day to this practice and he will soon notice the improvement in his speech both off and on the platform.

A great deal of indistinct enunciation on a platform is due to the fact that the speaker does not open his mouth vertically. The lower jaw should be dropped so that the complete formation of the vowels should not be handicapped. In order to learn the correct position of the mouth in speaking, read aloud the following, prolonging all the italicized vowels:

Rolling rocks resounded.

## CHAPTER XI.

### EMPHASIS

A clock's tick, a cow bell's tinkle, and the singing of a lullaby are excellent remedies for insomnia. In the first, we have regularity of rate; in the second, sameness of pitch; and in the third, evenness of force or stress. The reason back of the effect of each is the fact that the ear, like the receiving instrument of a radio set, adjusts itself to one rate, one pitch and one degree of force. The stability of any one of these keeps the mechanism of the faculties of hearing in a state of inaction, and inaction produces sleep. Tire any single faculty by repetition of the same movement and you put the entire body to sleep. In speaking we call this sameness monotony. Here the old saying, "Variety is the *spice* of life," understates the fact—"Variety is life." The speaker must, therefore, cultivate all the virtues of delivery that militate against monotony. And one of the most important of these

virtues, the one we are about to consider, is emphasis.

Emphasis is often considered as synonymous with force or stress. But it is a much broader term. It may be defined as any means whereby the speaker focuses the attention of the audience on the important words of a sentence in order to aid the listeners in understanding his thought.

Every sentence has but a few really important words—the rest are merely connectives and modifiers. The speaker's thought centers around these important words. If he utters his sentences in the same manner that the station agent chants his announcement of trains, he throws upon the audience the entire burden of selecting the centers of his thought. To increase the effect of his words and to remove the burden from the audience, the speaker must employ some means of making these big words strike home.

If you have ever read an editorial in a Hearst newspaper, you will find the important words underlined, capitalized or italicized. That is the writer's only method of emphasizing.

ing the centers of thought as the reader's eye runs over the printed page. But the speaker must use other means, and he is fortunate in having a great variety, both visual and auditory. Leaving aside for the present the visual means (gesticulation), let us consider the methods which appeal to the ear.

I.—The common method of emphasis is the use of force or stress, a method, however, which many speakers ignore completely. An excellent example of the use of stress as a means of emphasis is the following:

SIR JAMES: Now, *pray*, sir, don't *beat* about the *bush*, but explain to his lordship and the jury, who are expected to know *nothing* about *music*, the meaning of what you call *accent*.

WITNESS COOKE: *Accent* in *music* is a certain *stress* laid upon a *particular note* in the *same manner* that you would lay stress upon a *given word* for the *purpose* of being better *understood*. Thus, if I were to say, "You are an *ass*," the *accent* rests on *ass*; but if I were to say, "You are an *ass*," it rests on *you*, Sir James.

If you have difficulty in stressing important words, you can acquire the art by keeping the hands raised before you, one palm over the other, bringing them together with a clap every time you utter a word which you think should be emphasized. The necessity of making yourself heard above the clap forces you unconsciously to give the words greater force.

This method of emphasis includes the decrease as well as the increase of stress. Sometimes the lowering of the voice to a whisper is the most effective means of making the word or words stand out. This is particularly true when we wish to emphasize contrast, as in the following:

“If this is *peace*, give us *war*!”

II.—We have seen in a previous chapter that while the short Anglo-Saxon words are preferable to the Latinized ones, the longer ones are sometimes more effective. And the same reason that makes them more effective—the greater space of time in which they hold the attention of the audience—furnishes another means of emphasizing them. Note the

effect of prolonging the enunciation of the italicized word in the following sentence:

“The Germans wrote home that the fire of the Blue Devils was not deadly, but *murderous*.”

III.—Raising or lowering the pitch of the voice on certain words is a desirable means of emphasis when the thought repels the idea of emphasis through force. This is particularly true when the speaker wishes to preserve a mild, subdued tone of voice. Note the effect of raising the voice slightly on the word *less* and lowering it on the word *more*:

“If, then, that friend demand why Brutus rose against Cæsar, this is my answer: not that I loved Cæsar *less*, but that I loved Rome *more*.”

IV.—Nothing is more effective in focusing the attention of the listener on an important word than a pause immediately before it. The void arouses the attention and curiosity, so that the mind of the listener is poised on toes to meet it. Nearly every writer on the subject of speaking has lamented the fact that the pause, the most effective means of emphasis, is so rarely employed by public speakers. If

the student will but learn its power by forced use, when it is applicable, he will never fail to make use of it when the opportunity presents itself. The dash in the following represents the place of the pause:

“I was creeping on my stomach, trying to locate the position of the Germans by the light of occasional flashes. The number of dead bodies forced me to make repeated detours. I passed them by as I would so much wreckage. But one of them arrested my attention. For some reason it aroused my curiosity. So I lay beside it until a bursting star shell enabled me to recognize the features. It was—my brother.”

It is sometimes advantageous to combine two or more of the foregoing methods in order to gain the proper emphasis. The speaker should develop by practice his use of all. Then, if his mind is concentrated on the thought and feeling of his speech, his subconsciousness will select the proper channel or channels of emphasis.

## CHAPTER XII.

### PITCH

Every voice has its own natural pitch. Some are high, some are low, and the rest range between the two extremes. But we are concerned not so much with the pitch of the individual voice as with the necessity of using all the variety that its range affords.

Variety of pitch in speaking is important for two reasons: first, a proper expression of varying thoughts and feelings requires a sympathetic tone; second, change of pitch militates against the monotony which is so fatal to the life and interest of the audience, not to speak of its reaction on the speaker himself.

Many instructors and writers on the subject of elocution have attempted to work out a chart which will guide the student in selecting the proper pitch of the voice. The following will illustrate the classification:

*Excitement—Very High Pitch*

“Oh, John, the house is on fire and the baby’s lost! Hurry up!”

*Enthusiasm—High Pitch*

“I have learned the secret of effective speaking, and now watch me! Watch me, I said!”

*Pleasure and Calm Statement—Medium Pitch*

“That’s a beautiful little boy you have. Let me play horse with him.”

“Just follow the road and you’ll cross the track in about twenty minutes.”

*Seriousness—Low Pitch*

“You don’t look well. Don’t you think you should take a vacation?”

*Solemnity—Very Low Pitch*

“The pardon reached the prison too late. Phelps had already been executed.”

Your common sense tells you that you would have used the prescribed pitch instinctively in conversation. And platform speak-

ing is nothing more than conversation enlarged to meet the demands of the situation. But until the speaker has acquired ease on a platform, his variety of pitch is likely to be limited by reason of his inexperience. The nervous strain which public speaking produces in the beginner tends to stiffen the voice, heighten the pitch, and narrow the range. But until the student has overcome the handicap of inexperience he can be aided by a few concrete directions.

What is your medium pitch? What is the range of your speaking voice? Find out for yourself by delivering the following interrogation, first, with a rising and second, with a falling voice.

“Do we want to see the fruits of victory destroyed in a flood of anarchy?”

Deliver the sentence several times until the first and last words strike the highest and the lowest notes of your register. If you have taken both comfortably, the middle is your pitch. That is the pitch you use in ordinary conversation, because it comes with the least effort.

The necessity of being heard and the greater force required in platform speaking demand that we use a pitch a trifle higher than the one used in conversation. But the beginning speaker opens on a pitch altogether too high. And the audience detects it and becomes uneasy.

Go on the platform with a firm resolve to begin on a medium pitch. Whatever the thought of your opening remarks, you will find that they can best be expressed in a medium tone. As an aid in carrying out the resolution, look squarely into the eyes of some member of the audience seated near you. Such a practice brings you nearer the conversational style and pitch, and is an effective means of increasing naturalness and self-confidence.

As the speech proceeds, you will find that the increasing interest, both of yourself and of the audience, tends to raise the pitch. Unless this tendency is checked, your voice will soar until it reaches the highest point. For that reason, it is well to mark some point in your speech, before its delivery, where you

may lower the voice to a conversational tone. Many speakers handicapped by a highly strung nervous system and a consequent high pitch have employed this means with remarkable results.

## CHAPTER XIII.

### RATE

Rate, the speed of speaking, has a close affinity with pitch, both in degree and variety. Usually thoughts or feelings calling for a high pitch should be delivered at a high rate, while those fitting a low pitch demand a slow rate.

Variety of rate is important not only as a means of contrasting thoughts or emphasizing the relative importance of ideas, but also as an antidote of monotonous delivery. As with pitch, the beginning speaker must overcome the tendency toward sameness.

The value of change of rate as a means of focusing the attention of the audience on certain words has been mentioned under emphasis. As the sight-seeing motor car, speeding past commonplace dwellings, slows up while passing points of interest, so must the speaker decrease his rate not only to call attention to the centers of thought but to enable the audience to appreciate them.

Whether because of nervousness or a fear that unless the audience is engaged by a rapid-fire of language, it will lose interest, the inexperienced speaker often enters into a race with time. Such a practice exhibits a lack of self-confidence and the audience takes you at your own valuation. On the other hand, a slow, measured delivery is evidence of a poise and a dignity that always attract attention and respect.

The thought and feeling should, of course, determine the rate. Most speakers, excepting those handicapped by a limited vocabulary, find it easy to talk quickly. But few have learned the art of using a slow rate. When experience has developed confidence and concentration on the platform, the speaker's instincts will vary his rate according to the thought. The beginner can, however, gain some of the benefits of appropriate rate by holding himself down at the beginning of his speech. With some this is almost as difficult as holding in check a restless horse. So we must devise aids.

First, begin with a clean-cut enunciation,

prolonging the vowels as you did in reading the passage from Roosevelt's speech in the chapter on enunciation. You cannot make an effort in this direction without bringing your rate near the normal. Don't try to gain this end merely by pausing between words — a common habit with some — for that merely makes the delivery jerky. Lengthen the italicized vowels in the following sentence and note the effect on the rate:

*“Over the hill arose the tall, gaunt form of Joseph.”*

Second, focus your attention on the eyes of someone seated near the platform. As in pitch, the effect of this is to bring the rate down to that used in ordinary conversation.

Pause has been mentioned in a previous chapter as a means of emphasizing certain words or phrases. Every expressed thought sets in motion a chain of thought in the minds of the hearers. If you want a sentence to “sink in,” pause after it. The silence is golden because it permits the thought to run its course unchecked by the necessity of abandoning it for succeeding ideas. Note the

effect gained by pausing after the italicized words in the following passage from Emerson:

“Our strength grows out of our *weaknesses*. Not until we are *pricked* and *stung* and sorely shot *at*, awakens the indignation which arms itself with secret *force*. A great man is always willing to be *little*. Whilst he sits on the cushion of advantages, he goes to *sleep*. When he is *pushed*, *tortured*, *defeated*, he has a chance to learn *something*; he has been put on his wits, on his *manhood*; he has gained *facts*; learns his *ignorance*; is cured of the insanity of *conceit*; has got moderation and real skill.”

## CHAPTER XIV.

### THE EYE OF THE AUDIENCE

Modern writers on salesmanship make much of the value of engaging all the senses of the prospective buyer. The shoe salesman, for instance, is taught to put his sample into the customer's hands in order that the senses of sight, touch and perhaps smell may be utilized as well as the hearing. The reasoning back of this practice is very simple. The five senses are the only channels from the outside world to the brain. They vary, of course, in their powers of engaging the attention. But if they are all focused on one object, the chances of distraction are reduced to a minimum. Each additional sense that is called into action increases the strength of the impression made upon the brain of the customer.

Applying this theory to speaking, we find that there are but two senses through which the speaker can send him a message—hearing and sight. The preceding chapters on delivery

have dealt with those phases of speaking that concern the ear. We now come to the eye.

Imagine, if you can, "The Merchant of Venice" presented on a darkened stage. How long could Sir Henry Irving or Ellen Terry have held your interest and attention under such circumstances? Then think of the number of hours you have enjoyed the silent art of Mary Pickford or Douglas Fairbanks. The eye has a much stronger hold on the attention than the ear. "If the eye do not admire, the heart will not desire."

Long before primitive man developed an auditory language he communicated with others by means of signs. Relying almost wholly on visual language, he developed it to a high degree. And in spite of the cultivation of speech, the visual appeal is still the more potent of the two. A frown is much more eloquent in meaning than any words into which it might be translated; a finger pointed toward a door is more expressive than "Go"; a smile produces more results than any equivalent in speech.

Modern life tends to develop to the highest

degree this vehicle of thought. The nerves from the eye to the brain are shorter than those from the ear. The message sent over the visual wire is delivered and understood long before the auditory telegram is recorded. Entertainment through the cinema, propaganda through the printed circular, advertising by electric signs—all bear testimony to the strength of the visual. Its constant use has developed the sense of sight to enormous proportions. The eye is a hungry animal, ever seeking food. The speaker must satisfy it.

Let us consider all speaking from the standpoint of the eye. Let us analyze the situation for the purpose of making the visual appeal as strong as possible.

### *Distractions*

Many an unattractive waiter clearing away the debris of a dinner has captured the attention of an audience; many a conscientious janitor moving noiselessly around an auditorium to open the windows has drawn the focus from the speaker to himself. There is something pitiful about the way in which an audience

will turn its eyes from a distinguished orator to watch the motions of an usher, a latecomer or a stray dog. No speaker can compete successfully with counter attractions; no speaker of experience wants to try. When such a distraction enters the field, the skilful speaker attempts to join forces with it. While Bourke Cockran was addressing an audience on "The World War" in 1916, a man in the gallery interrupted with "What about the United States?" The speaker ignored the question until he saw that the heckler had become a center of visual interest. Then he interpolated, "The United States is only part of the world, New York is only a part of the United States, and that man is only a very small part of New York."

The first problem, then, is to eliminate as far as possible all competing attractions. The platform should be free from all objects that have any visual appeal. Many a prominent speaker has been handicapped by a group of individuals seated on the stage. The slightest movement of the hands, the shifting of knees, the occasional nod of approval—all tend to

draw the eyes of the audience from the speaker. If you are able to stipulate the conditions under which you will make your address, be sure to name a setting in which you will be the only attracting object.

The next consideration is the appearance of the speaker. In order to focus the eyes on the face—the only proper place—no other part of the body should attract attention. It has often been said that the best dressed man is the one whose clothes are never noticed. But the proper appearance of a speaker means more than putting aside the checkerboard vest and the bright green socks, or keeping a crease in the trousers and out of the sleeves. A newspaper or note-book protruding from a pocket or a visible pen or pencil is almost as dangerous as a noisy necktie.

### *The First Impression*

Nearly every living man who heard Lincoln testifies to the great handicap under which the Emancipator spoke. Tall and awkward, his clothes misfitted and baggy, the author of the greatest short speech in American history

made a poor first impression, which was never completely removed until some time after he had begun speaking. Daniel Webster, on the other hand, with his huge frame, large head and coal black eyes, gripped his audience the moment he appeared. His contemporaries often remarked that no man could be so wise as Webster looked. Few of us are blessed with that physical attractiveness that reaches out and arrests the attention of those who behold us; fewer still are those who have the resources of a Lincoln with which to efface a bad first impression. But every man can make a favorable impression at the start if he will but give the matter the required consideration and effort.

Long before a speaker utters a word, the audience has appraised him and formed an opinion. What are the bases of that appraisal? The attire has already been referred to as a potential distraction. As an element entering into the making of a good impression, clothes serve a double purpose. If a speaker is well groomed—clean linen, creased trousers and shined shoes—not only does the audience ap-

prove of his appearance, but it also gets the benefit of the increased self-respect and dignity which consciousness of a neat appearance produces in the speaker.

If you are on the platform before you are introduced, maintain an easy but dignified position. Every little movement is being watched by the audience. If you must walk to the platform, do so in an alert but measured manner, with no unnecessary movements of the arms, head or body. Two or three deep breaths will do much to quiet the nerves and overcome the tendency toward haste.

Self-consciousness in a beginning speaker often manifests itself in the all-hands-and-feet sensation. This usually results in the speaker's throwing all his weight on one foot, spreading his legs, folding his hands in front or behind or putting them in his pockets. All these mannerisms can be avoided if you but focus your attention on two things—first, keep the chest high; second, let the arms hang loosely at the sides as though they were paralyzed.

Have you ever noticed how actors and actresses open the first scene in a quiet, sub-

dued voice? No, it isn't imagination. That is their method of quieting the conversationalists and forcing the audience to sharpen its attention. Whether or not your audience is noisy, you can focus the attention by delaying your speech until you have surveyed every portion of the room in that "when I have your attention" manner. That little pause is the most effective preface.

### *Posture and Carriage*

The next time you walk along a crowded thoroughfare, notice the difference between the movements of individuals. The man of ability usually reveals his power by the manner in which he carries himself—head erect, with the back of his neck pressed against his collar, chin in, no swinging arms or swaying body, each step measured and firm. When he stops to speak with another, he maintains an erect, dignified posture instead of settling in a heap or leaning against a mail box. These characteristics impress you. You would like to do business with that man—he has your confidence and respect.

The correct posture on the platform is neither a slouch nor a West Point "attention." But the latter is far more preferable than the former. If you would know the best position of the body in speaking, go through the following exercise:

"Bend forward until the fingers touch the toes (if they can). Raise and stretch the arms and trunk slowly, taking a deep breath at the same time, until your arms, head, trunk and legs form one straight line. Do not raise the heels from the ground. Keep the chest high while you stretch the arms backward and downward, exhaling slowly. When the little finger touches your trousers, relax the entire arm and let it hang lifeless from the shoulder."

Such a posture gives an impressive bearing, facilitates proper breathing and gives the greatest freedom of movement.

Every student has seen some prominent speaker put his hands in his pockets, fold his arms in front or behind, lean on a table or spread his legs. In addition to the fact that such practices detract from the visual attractiveness of the speaker, there is this consider-

ation—when the body is in this unnatural position, the speaker must go through the motions of untangling himself before he can gesture or change his position. When an orator like Chauncey M. Depew speaks with his hands in his coat pockets, it may seem hypercritical to condemn the practice. Many an instructor has been told so. The best answer is this—“Mr. Student, when you acquire the ability and reputation of a Depew, you are privileged to fold your arms, play with your watch chain or perform any other stunt that the audience will stand for. But until you reach that eminence, you had better watch every little detail of propriety—you can’t afford to do otherwise.”

A speaker’s change of position on the platform must be guided by good judgment and moderation. He should not stand glued in one spot, nor should he walk from side to side like a caged tiger seeking an exit. A slight change of position at the beginning of a new turn in the speech breaks the monotony, refreshes the audience and aids the speaker in varying his pitch, rate and force. Rarely is it

desirable to walk while delivering an important sentence. The action at this time merely detracts and makes the audience restless.

### *Gestures*

Gesticulation, properly speaking, includes every physical movement of the speaker on the platform. But we are using it here in its restricted sense — movements of the arms, head and body, but not including a change of position or facial expression. Everyone gestures in conversation; the toss of the head and the outstretched hand are as natural as the dropping of the voice at the end of the sentence. But the self-consciousness that accompanies speaking in public tends to break the connection between thought and physical expression. The first task, then, is to re-establish that connection. Force the blood of expression into the arms. Put them in motion. At first it might seem as though something inside you broke loose. Very well, that only shows that you need more of it. The strangeness will soon wear off. Don't carry it to the point where it becomes a "babbling of the

hands," but if your trouble is an entire lack of movement, it is better to overdo it at the start; practice will teach you moderation and good taste.

The prime purpose of gesticulation is to aid the audience in understanding the thought and feeling of the speaker. It follows, therefore, that if the gesture is to serve its real purpose, it must be appropriate and fitting. The beginning speaker frequently develops a pet gesture which he uses for everything—to denounce the Bolsheviks and to praise the virtues of women. How is he to overcome the habit? By eliminating that gesture? No, the only solution for this monotony lies in cultivating others. There are hundreds and hundreds of gestures, and many new ones are in process of invention while this is being written. But as all musical compositions employ the same scales and notes, all gestures may be classified as modifications of a few standard ones. Some of these are given below. Read aloud the following sentences and then deliver them with the appropriate gestures. Practice each until it is yours:

A.—“*Wait a minute, I haven’t finished my sentence.*”

(Arm raised in front, hand open, with palm facing the audience.)

B.—“*If you sell this house, where shall I go?*”

(Arms stretched out, with hands open and at the level of the thigh, palms facing the audience.)

C.—“*Balboa went alone to the summit and out before him, stretched the vast horizon of the Pacific.*”

(Right arm stretched straight from the shoulder, palm down, sweeping from left to right.)

D.—“*I carry no ‘big stick,’ but I have a big fist and I intend to use it.*”

(Clenched fist agitated on level with shoulder, back of hand facing the audience.)

E.—“*If you re-elect him Mayor, you and you and you will suffer.*”

(Arm stretched out, index finger pointing toward a member of the audience. Change its direction on each *you*. This is the so-called *schoolmaster gesture*.)

F.—“*At first he merely became indifferent, but with the loss of his position and his family, he sank—down, down, down, until he reached the gutter of despair.*”

(Arm stretched midway between the front and the side, hand with palm up on a level with the thigh. Lower the arm and hand on each succeeding *down* so that it is at the side on the word *despair*.)

G.—“*Here is my proposition.*”

(Arm bent, hand in front on level with the waist, palm and thumb up.)

H.—“That sophistry may appeal to some, but when I hear a man use that argument, I say, “*Away with it!*”

(Right arm bent, hand on level with chest, with palm facing the audience. Thrust it to the right.)

I.—“Shall we fight for ourselves or *throw up our hands and cry ‘Help!’*”

(Arms bent, with hands raised at the side and above the head, fingers apart and relaxed.)

It is not to be expected that you will execute these gestures with Bryanesque grace or Websterian force. But practice will limber up the speaking muscles, tune them with the voice, and soon you will feel at home with them all, flavoring each with that little dash of individuality that proclaims you a creature of God and not an adding machine.

In executing a gesture, keep a firm control over every muscle. A sloppy, careless movement is never an ornament. Many inexperienced speakers deliver a gesture too soon, dropping the hand before completing the words it is intended to accompany. Hold it

right through and, if appropriate, a few seconds after the sound has died from your lips.

Movements of the head and body should be used sparingly. A toss of the head may be very eloquent, but if used frequently it destroys the reputation for dignity and self-control. The same is true of the trunk. The speaker should never permit a movement of the arm to sway the body; the tail should not wag the dog.

### *Facial Expression*

“As the language of the face is universal, so 'tis very comprehensive; 'tis the shorthand of the mind and crowds a great deal in a little room.”

—JEREMY COLLIER.

Some of our greatest living actors are failures in the movies. Why? Principally because the speaking body has not been developed to the point where it can express all the fine shades of thought and feeling without the aid of the voice. Perhaps the greatest asset in the cinema is facial expression. But its appeal is just as strong on the platform as it is on the screen.

Little movements of the eyes and mouth are constantly employed in conversation, both to color our words or to take the place of them. But the nerves which connect them with the centers of thought and feeling seem to suffer a complete paralysis on the platform. The result, in the beginning speaker, is sometimes a "poker face."

You know how unsatisfactory it is to hold a conversation in the dark. The reason is that you have been accustomed to use your eyes as well as your ears in interpreting remarks. The audience looks for the same little facial movements in a speaker, and if you can meet the demand, you have another weapon with which to enchain the attention and to strengthen the impressiveness of your delivery.

What is the remedy? It lies in strengthening the nerves controlling facial movements to the point where they cannot be paralyzed by platform sensations. The actor exaggerates his smile and sneer; the speaker must do likewise. Limber up the muscles of the face. The next time you attend the movies, follow in mimicry every little movement of the eye

and mouth. It will soon become a habit. Then when you go upon the platform, you can forget all about it—it will have become as natural as breathing in sleep.

### *The Speaking Body*

As previously stated, a physical movement is much more eloquent than language. A shrug of the shoulders, a raising of the eyebrows, a snapping of the fingers, may express an idea more accurately and forcefully than the finest figure of speech. Bryan is never more eloquent than when he ends a sentence with a pause followed by some graceful movement of the hand.

A class in public speaking was once sent to hear Wendell Phillips. The next day the instructor asked each man to write a criticism of Phillips's gestures. The results might have indicated that they didn't attend. But the truth was they couldn't remember anything about his gestures. Why? Because the speaker's art was so highly perfected that each physical movement lost its identity in the unity of his delivery and the resulting singleness of im-

pression. Any gesture or bodily movement which calls attention to itself is a distraction rather than an aid.

We know when our voices crack; our ears tell us. We cannot see ourselves as we appear before an audience. But we can get a fair idea of our visual appeal by using a contrivance quite common among finished orators. Wendell Phillips, Edward Everett and Lord Mansfield used to rehearse for hours before a silent critic—the mirror. That may strike you as carrying the matter too far. But everything has its price and the man who would carry his art to the goal of perfection must pay the freight.

Not many years ago students of psychology were stirred by a new theory of the emotions enunciated simultaneously by Professors William James, of Harvard, and Carl Lange, of Copenhagen. In brief, the theory holds that the bodily changes that accompany certain emotions are not in reality the resulting expressions of the emotions, but the causes of them. The theory has gained almost universal acceptance, although some psychologists still

refuse it. But whether the hen or the egg came first, each owes its existence to the other and the specie cannot perpetuate itself without both. When the speaker expresses his anger by shaking his clenched fist, the physical expression, in turn, increases the anger. And the stronger the emotion in the speaker the easier it will be for him to interpret it in delivery.

## CHAPTER XV.

### MEMORY

So many men complain of bad memory as an obstacle to their development as speakers, that a brief analysis of the subject and its application to oral discourse ought to be profitable.

There are many courses on memory training. They all accomplish results, they all vary in methods, but they all rest on three basic laws — attention, association and repetition. The mere understanding of these laws will not cure a diseased memory but it will give each man sufficient knowledge to diagnose his particular case with a view to finding and strengthening the weak link in the chain.

#### *Attention*

Lord Chesterfield once said, “The power of applying attention, steady and undissipated, to a single object, is the sure mark of a superior genius.” Whether or not you possess this power to a superior degree, it requires no

argument to support the proposition that if you would remember any particular fact or idea, you must make sure that your original grasp of the fact or idea is as clear as the impression that you would later recall. This means that you must focus your attention sufficiently to get a clean-cut conception of what you would remember; the photographic print does not grow brighter with age, neither does the picture that you store away in the recesses of memory.

### *Association*

Assuming that you have a clear understanding of what you would remember, where in your mental storehouse are you going to place this information or idea? Next to what other facts or opinions will it lie? If you placed a new set of cooking utensils in the bedroom, it is not unlikely that you would have great difficulty in placing your hands on them in a hurry. That may sound ridiculous, and yet many of us do not even take time to place newly acquired information in any room of the mind.

Napoleon once explained his marvelous memory by likening his mind to a chest of drawers, with everything put in the proper drawer and in the proper place in that drawer. Nothing was dismissed from his consciousness until it had been assigned to its proper place.

This methodical disposition of new ideas and knowledge is not so difficult as it might seem. The main thing is to keep the matter in the foreground of your mind until you have assigned it a place. Dates are the stumbling blocks in the study of all history. But see what can be done by association. Everyone can remember such years as 1492, 1776, 1861, and 1898. Now suppose you were told that the Protestant Reformation began with Martin Luther's revolt in 1513. A few seconds' reflection will suggest the fact that the latter event took place exactly twenty-one years after Columbus landed at San Domingo; a man born in the year of Columbus's discovery would have reached his majority when Luther defied Pope Leo X. You will probably never forget the latter date. That is the value of association.

So-called memory experts have devised many schemes for tying together various facts so that by getting hold of one the others follow like the links of a chain. There is no doubt that these methods produce great results. But when we consider how artificial they are, the time it takes to master the scheme, and the mental energy consumed in applying the scheme, it does seem that there ought to be some method more natural and more conducive to general development of mind. Most men of ability and wisdom have satisfactory memories. Some might argue that the secret of their success was memory. But it is more likely that their good memories were the by-products of their ability to analyze situations and to associate the various component parts with other facts and ideas they already knew. Every idea has attached to it a hundred or more strings, if we will only turn it over in our minds long enough to see it from every angle. By following every string and tying it to some other subject to which it naturally leads, we turn this floating fact or idea into an immovable buoy in our memory.

The common saying so often heard, "I can remember faces but not names," is simply a testimonial to the greater force of the visual as compared with the auditory. Make use of this greater force by employing pictures as a means of remembering. Had you never seen a print of Abraham Lincoln, you might find it difficult to recall that he was described as tall and thin, slightly stooped, and with thick, black hair. But having seen his picture, you can easily remember a dozen or more details of his appearance.

### *Repetition*

The eminent authority on memory, Dr. Buckley, once remarked that it is incorrect to say that we cannot remember, because in fact we remember nearly everything. If you doubt this statement, think of the number of times that a friend has recalled some event in the distant past which, until he recalled it, you thought had faded completely from your memory. Unless he recalled it, you never would have been able to bring it to the foreground of your mind. This proves that the

weakness lies not with your memory but with your power of recollection. And this weakness is the fatal spot in the so-called bad memory.

You have no difficulty in recalling your house or telephone number. Why? Because you have occasion to recall it so frequently that it becomes engraved on your mind. Practice, then, or repetition of the act of recollecting is the secret of overcoming this weakness.

Dr. Buckley prescribes an exercise which, in his opinion, should develop the weakest memory. Here it is: after getting into bed, trace all the events of the day in the order in which they occurred, from the moment of arising until the minute of retiring. Half a dozen high spots will stand out, the rest of the day will be screened in a fog. But persistent effort will bring forth one or more events in each blank period and then the fog will lift and you will recall many others. This exercise will consume about five minutes the first night, but within two weeks you will be able to cover the day in one or two minutes.

The poor memory of which the speaker

complains is usually due to one or more of three things: (1) memorizing the speech word for word; (2) failure to assemble the material in an orderly fashion and with a proper sequence, and (3) insufficient practice in going over orally or mentally the main points of the speech.

One of the greatest dangers in the path of the beginning speaker is the tempting practice of writing out a speech and committing it to memory, word for word. It is like the drug habit—once formed, it is almost impossible to work without it. So many arguments can be cited against it, that it seems like a waste of time to dwell on the evil. But men will persist in using this apparent harbor of refuge, and for that reason, some of the disadvantages should be stated.

First, memorizing a speech robs you of one of the greatest benefits of speaking—development of the ability to think on your feet. A child can memorize an oration, but it takes a man to turn ideas and thoughts into effective language. Frequently a man will say to himself, "I will memorize just this one so as to

be sure it will go all right, but I won't do it after this." Well, if you do it this time, the next time it will be harder to speak without it. And after a while you will need it as badly as a one-legged man needs a crutch.

Second, unless you are a skilled actor, you cannot speak from a memorized version and keep the fact from the audience. What do you think of a speaker when you learn that he has committed his talk to memory?

Third, talking from memory transfers the mental focus from the life and spirit of your subject to the cold word. The result is a lifeless delivery.

Fourth, you run the danger of forgetting the exact language you had decided upon, and that may be fatal.

If the speaker has assembled his material in some orderly fashion and has run over in his mind the outline a half dozen times, there is little danger of his forgetting it. Sometimes, however, a long speech which necessarily covers a variety of ideas is difficult to hold in mind without some scheme. What is the solution? We eliminate the practice of carrying

notes in the hand—no experienced speaker does it. The best method is to summarize each heading or paragraph into a word and then construct a sentence embodying all the descriptive words. Suppose you outline a speech on prohibition in this fashion:

### PROHIBITION IS A SUCCESS

1. Average workingman's family is better provided for.
2. Jails harbor fewer persons.
3. Alcoholic Diseases are decreasing.
4. Enforcement is improving every day.
5. Rising generation is not beset by dangers of intemperance.

Each of the five headings might be summarized in one word which will suggest the whole idea:

1. Workingman.
2. Jails.
3. Diseases.
4. Enforcement.
5. Youth.

Putting these into a sentence we get "Workingman jails diseases enforcing youth." True, it doesn't make any sense, but it is easily

remembered, and remembered, it gives the key to each part of the speech.

Another method is the visual one—a favorite with Mark Twain. Construct a picture of each heading in which some part will suggest the succeeding picture. Or imagine a series of actions in which the chronology will give you the order of ideas, for instance: “*a brick-layer (workingman) walks into a jail, and finds a diseased man forcing a youth to drink.*” Ridiculous? Of course, but try it and see how well it works.

## CHAPTER XVI.

### HEALTH AND VOICE

#### *Health and Speaking*

“I don’t know why I couldn’t put that speech across tonight; it went fine in practice.” Many times has that complaint been made to an instructor. How often does he inquire about the speaker’s health?

The activity of speaking is a strenuous one. It requires accurate co-ordination of nearly every part of the body and brain. If poor health in any way affects the delicate mechanism of either, the speaking will suffer.

Nearly all our great orators have been men of strong physique—Webster was a lion in strength; Lincoln was a champion wrestler in his teens; Bryan and Roosevelt amazed the country by their strenuous campaigns for office. Unless you are preparing to wage a political battle from the stump, it is not necessary that you possess a bull-dog constitution. But to do your best on any given occasion, it is

imperative that your condition be good, with every organ functioning properly.

### *Care of the Body*

Every man who has given the slightest attention to his health has learned long before maturity the peculiarities of his own body. He knows all his strength and weakness, and if he follows the advice which his own experience has formulated, he will probably keep himself fit. Nevertheless, it is well to call attention to a few points concerning health.

Most of our ills arise from alimentary causes. When a man takes good care of his stomach, his doctor's bills are usually small. Eat only such foods as are easily digested; cultivate the habit of chewing it thoroughly. The less liquid drunk with meals the better. Keep the bowels open.

A strong nervous system—very desirable to every speaker—feeds on muscular exercise. You may pride yourself on your health in spite of soft muscles, but when you take the platform you will find that the art is not a part of sedentary life. Get up five minutes

earlier tomorrow morning and go through two or three sets of exercises before dressing. Keep this up for a week and note the effect on your thinking and contentment.

How much do you smoke? Do you crave for tobacco at certain intervals? If you do, it is a sure sign that you are indulging to excess. Aside from the fact that it injures the throat and other parts of the vocal mechanism, excessive smoking decreases appetite, impairs digestion and destroys that fine nervous control which is so essential to effective speaking.

Colds, heavy or slight, have a pernicious effect on the proper functioning of the various parts of the body. Nearly all colds begin in the throat. A simple prevention has enabled many men to overcome chronic colds. When you rise in the morning, exercise the muscles of your neck for one or two minutes. Roll it around, bend it in every direction—it won't break. After your bath, dash cold water on your neck and chest. This daily practice will increase the resisting power of your throat to the point where it will stand the most inclement weather.

*Breathing*

Have you ever noticed that opera singers are usually well developed, radiate health and have a superabundance of energy? And what is more, they live to a ripe old age. What is the reason?

In ordinary breathing we use about ten per cent of the capacity of the lungs. In singing and in deep breathing all the little cells are filled, each extracts the oxygen from the air and gives it to the blood. The blood carries the nourishment to every part of the body. You know the result. "A hundred deep breaths a day keeps the germs of TB away," is one physician's favorite prescription. But before discussing further the subject of breathing, let us consider the organs used in breathing and speaking.

The trunk is divided into two large cavities, the abdomen and the chest. In the abdominal cavity are the stomach, liver, intestines, and other organs; the heart and lungs fill the chest cavity. The two cavities are separated by a sheet of strong muscle called the diaphragm.

This partition, the seat of breath control, is shaped like a saucer turned upside down. When the lungs are filled, this muscular tissue flattens and presses out the ribs in all directions, and massages the liver and stomach. On the roof of the diaphragm rests the base of the lungs. The lungs, larger at the bottom than at the top, where their expansion is limited, are composed of innumerable cells connected with the windpipe by bronchial tubes. What we call the "Adam's apple" is the larynx, or "voice box," which tops the windpipe. Across the opening (glottis) at the top of the "voice box" are stretched membranes. The air from the lungs passing over these membranes causes them to vibrate and produce sound, just as the violinist's bow brings forth music by oscillating the strings. These membranes may be tightened or slackened, the first to produce a high and the second a low pitch. The proper functioning of these membranes is impeded by any tension of the muscles of the throat. The sound produced by the vibration of these vocal cords flows upward until it reaches the base of the mouth.

There some of it passes into the mouth and some of it into the nasal cavity. Both cavities act as sounding boards or amplifiers. The soft palate, the tongue working with the teeth, and the lips transform the sound into speech, while the nasal cavity gives it volume and ring.

In order to produce the best quality of tone, it is necessary that the air be plentiful. Deep or diaphragmatic breathing fills the lungs from the bottom up, gives an adequate support to the voice and relieves the muscles of the throat of the necessity of straining to produce sufficient vocal volume. It physics the lungs, tones the nervous system and increases the physical and mental energy.

Once formed, the habit of deep breathing becomes stronger than any desire for artificial stimulant. Open your window, then go through the following exercise:

“Stand erect with head and chest high, abdomen in, balancing the weight on the balls (not the heels) of the feet. Drive all the air out of the lungs, keeping the chest as high as possible. Inhale slowly through the nose (keep the mouth closed), sending the air to

the bottom of the lungs. Do not raise the shoulders. When you have filled the lungs to the fullest capacity, do not hold the air, but exhale slowly through the nose and mouth, the jaw relaxed.”

Breath control is just as essential to the speaker as to the singer. In order to develop that control, repeat the above exercise, with this modification — while exhaling, hold a lighted candle before the mouth; practice exhaling so steadily that the flame of the candle will assume a fixed angle. Then go through the same exercise, exhaling so slowly that the flame will not flicker at all. A substitute for these exercises is the practice of slow breathing while walking. When you leave your home in the morning, time your inhaling and exhaling so that each will be measured by six steps. The next morning increase it to eight. On the third, try ten.

### *Voice*

*Mend your speech a little  
Lest you may mar your fortune.*

John T. Morse, Jr., in his life of Jefferson, writes that the weakness of Jefferson’s voice,

more than any other thing, prevented him from becoming successful in trial work. Henry Clay, on the other hand, was a great advocate, one of the chief reasons being that he had a voice that was marvelously musical and of rare power.

If you think that your voice is as unchangeable as the color of your eyes, you are wrong. The greatest orator of all ages—Demosthenes—had, in his youth, a weak, raspy voice. And, what was worse, he had an impediment in his speech. But by systematic training, which included declaiming by the seashore with pebbles in his mouth and talking while running uphill, he developed the greatest speaking voice of his generation.

In approaching the subject of improving the voice, we are reminded of that saying so common among the Micawbers of this day, “Don’t interfere with Nature.” Well, we are not interfering with nature; we are merely removing the obstructions which you have placed in her way. Let us consider a few phases of vocalization.

Faulty enunciation is usually the result of

a clumsy tongue. Nature intended that this organ should perform the major portion of the task. But man spares the tongue and divides its labor among the muscles of the throat, the jaw and the lips. Distinct enunciation demands a strong, flexible tongue capable of rapid and accurate adjustment. Strengthen it by rapid exercises. Pressing the tip against the top of the lower teeth, roll the body of it out between the lips. Open the mouth and wag the tongue upward and downward. Make it curl like a snail's body. Accurate enunciation is often a function of the proper co-ordination of the tongue and teeth. The Teuton thinks he cannot pronounce *th*—he says *dis* for *this*. If he would but watch an American place his tongue against the upper teeth, he could by imitation learn to enunciate the word in less than five minutes.

The success of Joseph H. Choate as a trial lawyer has been attributed to the resonance of his voice. No juryman could go to sleep while his organ-like voice was working. You can acquire some of that resonance if you will but make use of the human sounding board—

the nasal cavity. That undesirable "twang" which is sometimes called "speaking through the nose" is the result of *preventing* the passage of sound through the nose. When we make use of this sounding board, the result is similar to that of talking in a rain barrel. A great deal can be accomplished in this direction by keeping the air passages connecting the mouth, nose and ears free from obstructions. Wax in the ears and dust in the nose and nasal cavity rob the voice of the bell-like ring just as rags in a cornet muffle its tones. A little salt and water gently snuffed up in the morning and a weekly application of warm water and soap to the ears will be of great help to the quality of resonance.

You have seen many advertisements setting forth the wonderful powers of certain lozenges and throat sprays. If half of the testimonials written by opera singers are true, it is a wonder how many of them find time to do anything but try cures and write recommendations. The late Dr. H. Holbrook Curtis, throat specialist, was consulted by nearly all the concert singers in New York as well as by

prominent speakers including Roosevelt. He usually prescribed voice exercises, the most common of which was humming the scale up and down.

Humming is an excellent practice for developing resonance, because it forces the air through the nasal cavity. Robert J. Hughes, the voice specialist, prescribes a very simple exercise in this direction. Take a deep breath and hum “minim” continuously, prolonging the m’s and the n’s.

That harsh, raspy tone of voice, which limits the success of so many business as well as professional men, is partially due to forcing the voice from the throat instead of relaxing the throat and supplying the energy from the lungs. Never speak, on or off the platform, without breath support. Think of this while dictating to your stenographer or telephoning, and your work on the platform will take care of itself.

Flexibility of voice—the foundation of modulation and inflection—can be acquired by reading aloud poetry and verse. Recite the following lines on *Opportunity* by Senator

Ingalls, putting into its delivery all the sympathy you possess:

“Master of human destinies am I! Fame, love and fortune on my footsteps wait. Cities and fields I walk: I penetrate deserts and fields remote, and passing by hovel and mart and palace, soon or late I knock unbidden at every gate! If sleeping, wake; if feasting, rise before I turn away. It is the hour of fate, and they who follow me reach every state mortals desire, and conquer every foe save death; but those who doubt or hesitate, condemned to failure, penury and woe, seek me in vain and uselessly implore. I answer not and return no more!”

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